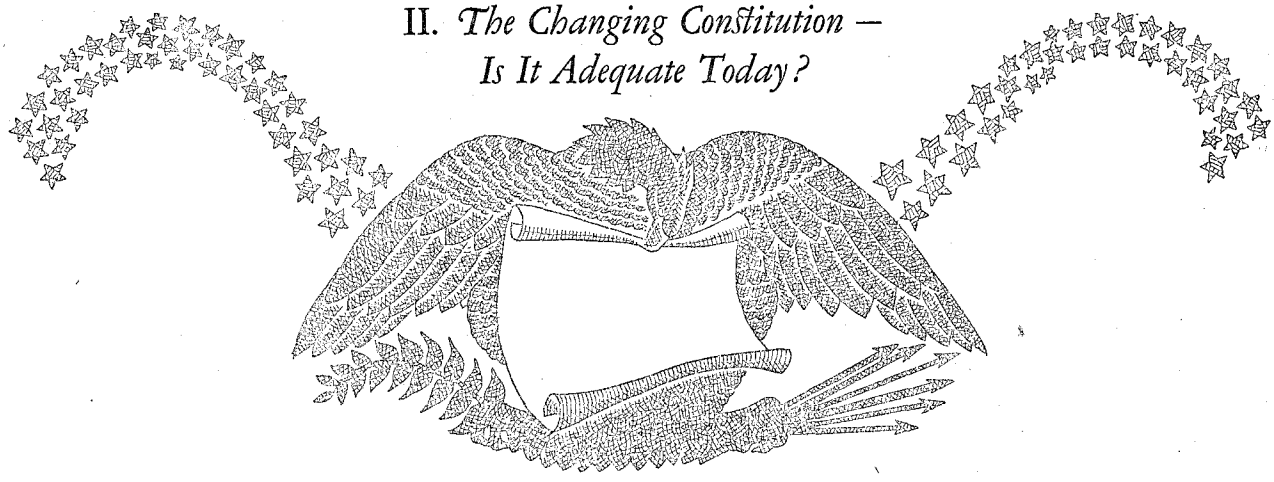
SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE
VOL. XCIX JANUARY, 1936 NO. 1

The Crisis and the Constitution

By James Truslow Adams

II. *The Changing Constitution — Is It Adequate Today?*



Following his introductory article last month, Mr. Adams now attacks the important question of changing the instrument of government. He points out how rapidly and how radically it has been changed in the past—and not only by written amendment. Next month he will take up changes in the American people and the question, "Do We Need a Dictator?" Reflecting further light on the question are two articles in this number: "Fascism at the Door" (page 33) and "Communist False Fronts" (page 18)

A CONSTITUTION has to fit the special genius of the people who live under it. This psychological aspect of any fundamental law is even more important than the legalistic one.

In time the genius of the American people may change. Man's nature is the product of both heredity and environment. We are today a nation but not a fully developed and homogeneous race. The nation is clearly moving into a new world in which our experiences will be different from those in the past. Nevertheless, we Americans, varied as we are, have been molded by many of the same fundamental experiences. As our country has produced what I have called for short, "the American Dream," so there has been a distinct American spirit. As yet, in spite of the changes of the last generation, and the doubts and hesitations of the present, I do not believe there has been basic change as yet in this American spirit as created by earlier conditions.

An American is still profoundly moved, as were his ancestors, by the words of Jefferson, hackneyed as they have become by incessant repetition. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." In spite of the ease with which they may be criticised, the words of the Declaration, like those of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, touch something so deep in an American that it may be considered the core of his being.

It was with that philosophy or emotion, as you will, in their hearts that Americans adopted and came to revere the Constitution, in spite of all the sordidness which can be injected into the story. That Constitution was originally adopted in the midst of the greatest crisis in our history. Had that crisis, far graver than that of today, not been surmounted in a way consonant with the character and aspirations of the great mass of the people, there would be no United States of America. Small, independent, and hostile nations would have repeated on the soil of our continent the wars and feuds which have made the unhappy history of Europe.

In 1787 the nation had been through a devastating war. As in Germany after the World War, our currency had become worthless, with all the sufferings entailed by unlimited inflation. The "natural rights," which had been so loudly invoked, had in many cases turned into natural license. Not only had the national government broken down, but Shays's Rebellion in Massachusetts, exaggerated in the public mind, had made it seem as though even the most conservative States might also, within their own borders, be unable to maintain law and order.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The result of the effort to meet the crisis was the drawing up and adoption of that written Constitution of 1787, which proved to be, as Woodrow Wilson called it, "the vigorous tap-root" from which has grown "a vast constitutional system—a system branching and expanding in statutes and judicial decisions, as well as in unwritten precedent." The document was on the whole a conservative one, but it also offered to the people a freer form of government and greater participation in it than were then to be found anywhere else on the globe. To try to make the drawing-up and adoption of the Constitution appear as a "counter-revolution," in our modern sense, is fantastically to distort history and to play with words.

It must also be remembered that one of the permanent characteristics of Americans has been that, although daring innovators in industrial fields, they have been of all peoples probably the most conservative politically. The new form of government contained novel and untried features. The chief evil, against which orators had declaimed and the war had been fought, had been interference with local liberties by a distant government, the British. Therefore it now seemed good that the central government in America should not have power to interfere with the citizen; in fact that it should have quite limited power so as not to become dangerous. It was, in reverse, the same sort of reaction against previous conditions which is occurring in many minds now, namely, that because we are finding it difficult to do all we want with our system of division of powers between the federal and State governments, we should, therefore, without further consideration of possible results in unexpected ways, give the federal government all the powers it may ask.

It is often said, especially by Englishmen, that it is a great misfortune for us that we have a written constitution a hundred and fifty years old. This assumes two things, each false—one that a written constitution must offer a rigid barrier to the will of the people, and, second, that the American Constitution consists only of the document drawn up in 1787.

There are several things to be noted as to this criticism. Even if it be claimed that a "written" constitution is more difficult to work than an "unwritten" one, modern free nations have to be content with trying to work the written sort. Obviously no new nation can have centuries in which to grow from a simple to a complex society, developing at the same time its constitution from precedent down to precedent. A Mussolini or a Hitler may tear up a constitution, written or unwritten, and rule without one, but a free people forming themselves for the first time and at a given moment into a nation will always have to set down the general principles and rules for the new government they deliberately erect. There is no choice in the matter.

Another point is that when many people speak of the British constitution as being so much more flexible than the American, what they are really thinking of is the greater freedom which Parliament can exercise in legislation as compared with Congress. This is true, but in some ways it is as hard to change the British constitution as it is the American. In 1912, for example, we made a profound change in the nature of our Senate from that contemplated in the Constitution, with much less trouble than the British have had with their similar problem of what to do with the House of Lords. As for enlarging the powers of Congress, we can do that any time that a sufficient number of Americans really want it done. We enlarged those powers at the expense of the States when the Income Tax Amendment was passed, and, *provided it was really desired,* we could make Congress practically free. The plain fact is that it has not been desired by the people as a whole, and it is that fact, and not a written constitution, which deters us from making Congress as supremely powerful as Parliament.

No constitution will prove rigid if the spirit of the people and of those administering the constitution is free and elastic. No constitution will be flexible if the spirit behind it is rigid. As Bagehot pointed out in England in 1872, there had then "been a change of a sort which, above all, generates other changes—a change of generation," and he noted that "we are now quarrelling as to the minor details of an Education Act; in Lord Palmerston's time no such Act could have been passed." We in America may also note that in 1935 we have been quarrelling over the features of an Income Tax Bill; in the days of Theodore Roosevelt, Congress would have had no power to pass any Income Tax Bill at all. In each case English and American, it has been the change in spirit *behind* the constitution which has broadened the scope of legislative power.

There is another point about so-called "written" constitutions. That is that the older they are the better. Ours is now the oldest of any great nation. That is an advantage. It would be clearly a great disadvantage if the Constitution were wholly incapable of growth and adaptation, but ours has been capable of both. We may not have developed it as far as we might or as might be wise, but that is for the people to decide. The point as to the advantage of age is that any written instrument, no matter what its attempted meticulous accuracy of meaning or lucidity of wording, will be liable to different interpretations by different persons. Whether it is a constitution, law or ordinance, or even a mere business contract, honest differences of opinion will have to be settled by the courts. In the last hundred and fifty years an enormously valuable work of a clarifying and developing interpretation of our Constitution has been going on, which would all have to be done over again were a wholly, or even largely, new constitution to be drawn up.

We may now turn to consider what the people in 1787 believed should be the general objectives of governments. We must draw a sharp distinction between what a people believes are the aims to be attained and the mere methods of attainment. The former spring from the genius of a people whereas the latter are matters of mere political experiment.

The objectives were clearly set forth in the preamble to the new Constitution and were declared to be "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty." These were the "goods" then desired, and which I think we still desire, that the federal government should provide. Having agreed on the goods, however, some of the questions we have already dis-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cussed arose. A government, for example, seeking zealously but misguidedly the "general welfare" might destroy liberty, as the planned economy of Russia has. Again, how "general" would welfare have to be? Could the supposed welfare of 90 per cent of the people be promoted at the cost of confiscation from the other 10?

The rest of the original Constitution of 1787, admirably brief, is taken up with an effort to organize a skeleton of government in such a way as to allow for growth and to prevent by a system of checks and balances the abuse or mistakes of power. The States were balanced against the federal government; the upper and lower Houses of Congress against one another; the executive against the legislative; the judiciary against all; and there were other minor checks. As a matter of fact, these checks and balances have worked very differently at different times, and perhaps nothing shows the real flexibility of a supposedly rigid constitution more than the way in which power has shifted in actual practice back and forth between the various depositaries of it. Recently, for instance, the Executive appeared all powerful before an almost completely subservient legislature, whereas when Wilson wrote his *Congressional Government* the complaint was that Congress had usurped almost all power from the other branches.

The Constitution in so far as it then consisted only of this document of 1787, the "tap-root" of our present one, was wisely intended to be merely a sort of skeletonized plan in which were set forth what the federal government could and could not do, what the States could not do, and, in the first ten amendments of 1791 (which practically formed part of the original), what rights could not be taken away from the citizens under any circumstances. The arrangements for the practical working of governmental machinery were of the slightest. It was, indeed, a skeleton which would have to become clothed with the living flesh of what we have noted as the Constitution understood in much broader terms. It is the Constitution in this broadest sense that counts, and in considering the flexibility and adaptability of our governmental system, we must take the whole of it into consideration.

No matter how wisely a constitution may be drawn to meet the needs of a people at any given moment in their development, unless it later prove elastic enough to meet altered conditions at a new stage, neither its age nor its previous usefulness can save it. Life is change. Healthy life is growth, and such life cannot be confined within a strait-jacket of the dead past. Under our Constitution, sovereignty was retained in the hands of the people themselves. Our theory of government has nothing to do with the European one which makes an abstract entity, "the state," sovereign *over* the people. The people as sovereign have the right to change the Constitution, but that right does not inhere in the government nor any branch of it, without the people's acquiescence.

The Constitution can be changed in many ways other than that of formal amendment. Nevertheless, as a written Constitution is, and always must be, necessary as the "tap-root" of the great tree of our entire constitution, it was provided that, when changes made in other ways might conflict too greatly with some desired interpretation of the wording of our "literary Constitution," the wording itself could be altered by the expressed will of the people. If the people, in all the ways open to it, do not alter the Constitution in one respect or another, the reason would seem to lie, rather than in any defect in the Constitution, in the fact that the great bulk of the people either do not want what is loudly called for by minorities or that they are too lazy or too little politically minded to take an interest in running their own government. As a matter of fact, the Constitution has been constantly altered by many methods, and we now go on to consider some of these.

Speaking first of the *formal amendments,* we may note that there have been twenty-one of them thus far, and that, on the whole, they may be said to record the less important changes which the original Constitution has undergone, although the XVIth, which allows of a graduated income tax, contains the possibilities of enormous changes in society. Of the whole twenty-one, ten were adopted as the "Bill of Rights" in 1791. Two others had been adopted by 1804, subsequent to which date no more were added until after the Civil War. From 1870, no other was proclaimed until 1913. This gave the impression that the process of formal amendment was slow and cumbrous, tending, in the minds of those who saw in the "Constitution" only the original document and these formal amendments, to the belief that the Constitution must in consequence be exceedingly rigid. This was false, even in the case of formal amendment, as is shown by the fact that between 1913 and 1933, a period of only twenty years, six amendments have been added, in one or two instances with a speed which much surprised the nation.

A Constitution which can be altered by even formal amendment on an average of once every three years or so, cannot be considered as too rigid to respond to the genuine wishes of any large part of the people. The truth would rather seem to be that the long periods during which the Constitution has gone without such amendments have proved quite other points. For one, it has indicated the innate political conservatism of the American people. Moreover, when we realize, the enormous alteration in our life and needs between 1804 and 1913, and the fact that we were able to adapt government to them with only the three formal amendments incident to the Civil War, we must recognize that flexibility of the Constitution can be secured in other ways, and that the political genius of America is capable of adjusting its government to altered situations not by a single method, but by many.

Before leaving the method of amendments we may note that some have been secured only after a very long period of consideration, whereas others have been secured after a brief one. The inference is that if it takes a disappointingly long time to secure some amendments, dear to the hearts of certain groups, it is not because of any insuperable difficulty of working the Constitution by this method but because public opinion is not always unified enough to make a specific change sufficiently desired. There can be no objection among a self-governing people, who do not wish to be stampeded by ardent minorities, to the fact that the tempo of change in the Constitution, by formal amendment or otherwise, should be more or less in accord with that in public opinion.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We may now glance at other methods of altering the Constitution and machinery of government. One of these is to be found in what we may call *usages*. For example, the 1787 Constitution provided that a congressman must be an inhabitant of the *State* in which he is chosen. No amendment has ever been passed further limiting his place of residence. Yet it has been as effectively limited to the *congressional district* from which he is returned as though that were stated in the original Constitution itself.

Perhaps the most striking example of how usage can alter the Constitution is that of the change in the election of the President. The intent and wording of the 1787 Constitution were clear on this point. The President was not to be elected by the people directly. Nevertheless, because public opinion demanded it, the working of the constitutional machinery was so altered as to bring about the desired result though the wording of the "Constitution" remains unaltered and there has never been an amendment as to this point. Originally not the people but men chosen to represent them in the "Electoral College" were to vote for the President. Now the members of the College are elected by the people, and although the old clumsy machinery is maintained, the members of the "College" are pledged in advance to vote for the man whom the party which elects *them* wishes for President, so that the people in reality vote directly for President.

According to the Constitution, senators were likewise not to be elected directly by the people, but in this case also the popular will brought about a change, first merely in the working of the constitutional machinery similar to that in the case of the President, and only later ratified by a formal amendment. Thus usage, in the case of the President, has made quite as effective a constitutional change as has the formal amendment in the case of senators. In the three cases cited—and many more could be, did space permit—it is clear that the vital element has been at work, altering the Constitution without formal amendment, except as a sort of afterthought in one case. As interpreting the spirit of the people each instance shows their increasing desire for more direct participation in government and for greater democracy, and not an increasing willingness to be governed by others.

There have also been many instances in which the Constitution has been "got around" or altered by what we may call *national acquiescence*. The most noted of these was the purchase of the Louisiana territory by Jefferson, doubling the territorial size of the United States. It is true that the Constitution provided that additional states could be created out of the unorganized territory already held by the old states in common, but it had never been contemplated that Congress might by purchase, conquest or otherwise, double, treble or quadruple the size of the original nation and by creating states in the new domain possibly destroy the political influence of those comprising the first "United States." As Jefferson said, if that could be done under the Constitution then there was no Constitution. Nevertheless, the national gain was so great and the opportunity so exceptional and fleeting, that in spite of Jefferson's desire for an amendment validating the purchase, the nation accepted the accomplished fact and never bothered. This illustrates another trait in the American people, which is, that however legal-minded and conservative they are, they can find a way round the Constitution when they are sufficiently united on an important issue in a national crisis. With the exception of the Civil War, when opinion was hopelessly split *sectionally*, the Constitution so far has been flexible enough, or its vital element potent enough, to secure what a united public opinion has genuinely desired.

Another method of altering or adapting the Constitution in its narrow sense, or of natural growth in its larger sense, has been what James Madison early called *"administering it"* into something different, or what we call *interpreting it*. The classic example is that of Alexander Hamilton. Briefly, the story is this. There had been two parties in the Constitutional Convention, as there had been among the people, divided on the question whether the federal government should be strong with wide powers or relatively weak with limited powers. Hamilton had been defeated in his endeavors to secure as wide powers for the federal government as he deemed essential, but he realized that what had been denied him in the Convention might be attained by administering the powers granted and by interpreting the words of the Constitution itself. What did its words, so apparently lucid and so carefully chosen, really mean? The first great difference of opinion, to which Jefferson and Hamilton gave expression, became obvious in the opinions each delivered to Washington as to the constitutionality of establishing a national bank.

Jefferson did not believe that by any fair stretching of the meaning of any clause could it be found that the government had the constitutional right to establish such an institution. Hamilton, however, insisted that the clause granting to Congress the power "to make all laws necessary for carrying into execution the enumerated powers" was sufficient, arguing that the word *necessary* often meant "no more than needful, requisite, incidental, useful or conducive to." By rejecting the meanings of absolutely or indispensably necessary he developed his doctrine of *implied* powers which would belong to the government to enable it to execute its *expressed* powers. The doctrine was accepted, and has been of incalculably great effect in making the Constitution flexible.

The incident shows the power which a strong mind, backed, of course, by sufficient public opinion, can have upon the Constitution, and also how even a written Constitution can be unfolded, so to say, by interpreting, without formally altering or amending, the actual words. Had that happened only once, the episode would have no application to our present problems. It has in fact been a continuing process steadily at work all through our history. The influence of the Supreme Court in this respect has been chiefly in the public eye, but, of extreme importance as it is, it is only one of such influences operating almost daily.

In the earlier Republic the man after Hamilton who did most to change, or as some might say, develop the Constitution along the line which he thought it should take was John Marshall, the great Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. In speaking of his work we are again not indulging in mere historical retrospect but are illustrating

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

both the possibilities of the Constitution and the political character of our people.

We have already spoken of the division of powers between the federal government, the State governments, and the people, and between the three branches of the central government. There was one very important omission in the skeleton constitution of 1787. We have seen how the plainest of words and phrases may be honestly understood in different ways by different interpreters. In case one of the human parts of this delicate machinery of checks and balances should understand its own powers in a different sense from that in which others understood them, who would decide which was right? The federal government was not, and was not intended to be, a government of unlimited powers. Suppose Congress passed legislation in excess of those powers delegated to it, or the President went far outside the bounds set for him, or the States trespassed on the field of federal action, who should decide what legislation and acts were legal and constitutional? Frequent misunderstandings might stop the wheels of government and bring about a complete break-down. Here was a complicated game to be played by players who might honestly—or even dishonestly—differ as to the way in which they should play. Who should be umpire? The Constitution was silent.

It is true that it created a Supreme Court of the United States, and gave Congress the power to create inferior ones, but nothing was said in it about federal courts having the right to pass on the constitutionality of measures. To wring any such construction out of the brief paragraph on the judiciary can only be done by such wide interpretation and course of reasoning as in themselves to give rise to honest differences of opinion.

It may be said that Hamilton and some of his followers believed that such power for the Supreme Court was implicit in the Constitution, but others equally great wholly disagreed on this point. That the leading men of the nation, many of whom had taken prominent part in framing the Constitution, could thus disagree in the first decade after the Convention certainly shows that, however individuals might interpret the instrument, or may do so now, no such power had been clearly given to the Court. If the members of the Convention had agreed that the Court should possess such power, the grant could easily have been put into simple and lucid language.

The situation was fraught with great danger. In the first dozen years or so the problem worried all thoughtful men. Various plans were proposed. It was suggested that each department of government should act and decide for itself—which meant chaos. It was also suggested that each State legislature should decide for itself whether federal legislation and acts were constitutional and whether they need be obeyed or not—which again meant chaos. Among other suggestions was one to make the Supreme Court the final arbiter. But, as has just been pointed out, there was nothing in the Constitution itself which clearly gave to that one branch of the complex and inter-locking State and federal machinery such a power. The final decision would thus rest not in the written words of the Constitution but in the working out in its own way of what we have called the vital element. In the possible struggle for power between the three branches of the federal government, and between that government and the thirteen States, jealous of each other and of the central government, it was evident that the problem of an umpire would have to be settled in a way which would secure the overwhelming assent of the people if government were to operate smoothly or at all.

Marshall had long pondered the problem, and had decided in favor of the Supreme Court as final interpreter of the Constitution. In the case of *Marbury vs. Madison* in 1803 he seized the opportunity to attempt to establish this power.

Now we come again to the political character of the people. Among so many differing opinions and so much combustible political material, would such an assumption be acquiesced in or not? The Court had no physical sanctions whatever by which it could over-awe the people or enforce its interpretation. Nevertheless, the assumption of such power *was* accepted, and in spite of occasional incidents, for more than a hundred and thirty years, the claim of Marshall has been generally conceded, though at times certain decisions have been exceedingly unpopular. The plain sense of the people has showed them that in the game of politics, as in baseball, some umpire is essential to interpret the rules and to decide as to acts of the players. On the whole, as the ultimate determination of what was constitutional had to be placed somewhere, it was decided that to place it in the Supreme Court, made up of men most learned in the Constitution, appointed for life and without political ambitions, would be the best, even though not always wholly an ideal, solution of a compelling practical dilemma which *had* to have some solution, practical even if not ideal.

The solution chosen suits the American character. In spite of the lawlessness of individuals in private life, we have as a nation a respect for law and a hatred of violence. Our pacifism does not stem from lack of courage but from a feeling that violence is a stupid way of settling differences of opinion. Just as we have, with the one exception of the Civil War, accepted the decision of the majority, even when so dubious as in the Hayes-Tilden election, without violence, so we prefer to settle differences which might arouse national passions, by the judicial decision of the Court, however unpopular at the moment. This is another example of both the desire and the ability of the American people to govern themselves, and of the flexibility of the Constitution. No one today doubts that Supreme Court review of legislation is constitutional, but that power is neither in the Constitution of 1787 nor has there been any formal amendment establishing it. It became part of our constitution, in its wider meaning, through the courage of Marshall backed by the acquiescence of the nation.

In a short article, we clearly cannot discuss even the most important decisions by which the Supreme Court has managed by interpretation, and even on some occasions by the reinterpretation of a reversed decision after some years, to make the Constitution fit our changing needs. We may at times have a strongly reactionary President and Congress, and there have been times when the Court has been reactionary, but on the whole I think an examination of the decisions handed down will show a genuine and, for the most part,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an extraordinarily successful effort by the Court to broaden the meaning of the written parts of the Constitution to keep pace with the modernizing of the vital part.

One or two points may be mentioned. The Court cannot determine the constitutionality of a law until a case is brought before it as a matter of private litigation. In the enormous mass of hasty and often badly worded legislation turned out annually by Congress, a law in the form in which it is drawn may have to be declared unconstitutional whereas had Congress taken more care in the legislation it might not have been disallowed. Even so, there are two popular impressions, both of which are erroneous. One is that the chief pastime of the Court is declaring laws unconstitutional. The fact is that until quite recently the Court had so declared in only fifty cases in its entire history. Again, it is generally considered that decisions are almost always five to four, though such a close division on an important constitutional question occurred only nine times in a hundred and fifty years.

It may also be noted that the Court is helpless unless backed by popular opinion. It has, as I have said, no power of its own to enforce its decisions, but must trust to Congress and then to the President, who is required as the executive branch of government to enforce the law. Moreover, the Court has original jurisdiction only in cases "affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be a party." The power of constitutional revision would be of little use in controlling legislation if confined to such cases. In all others the Supreme Court has appellate jurisdiction only, and merely: "with such Exceptions, and under such regulations as the Congress shall make." These are the words of the constitution of 1787, and it is hard to believe that the makers of that instrument would both give the Court power to pass on acts of Congress and the Congress the power to regulate the cases which could come before the Court. However, the facts that the power of the Supreme Court to pass on the constitutionality of the acts of Congress and that the right of Congress under the written Constitution would conflict with it, if exercised, again show clearly how much more the Constitution has become than the original document. Congress has another whip over the Court in its right to determine the number of judges, so that at any time it could, at least by letter of the law, "pack" the Court. It is highly improbable, however, that today an Executive would dare completely to flout the Court, or that Congress would exercise its powers over it. In other words, the vital element in the Constitution has become in this respect, as in others, more determinative than the words of the Constitution itself, without any formal amendment.

It may be added that if the Court, whose function is to interpret law, and which in general in so doing goes as far as possible to meet the popular will when obviously expressed, cannot find itself able to declare the legislation constitutional, the people have an immediate remedy to their hand in the form of an amendment to the Constitution, as was the case in the income tax. If in that case there was a long delay in passing the amendment in 1911 after the adverse Court decision in 1894 it was because public opinion on the question was far from being so consolidated in favor of such a tax as to make rapid amendment possible. As we have noted, however, when that opinion is aroused and fairly united, as was finally the case as to the failure of Prohibition, an amendment can be swiftly passed.

Another method of altering the Constitution and lessening its claimed rigidity has been what we may call the *extraconstitutional machinery*. Most notable in this is the whole system of party control over nominations, conventions, and the whole political organization extending from the administration down to the humblest voter in the wilds. The original Constitution was almost wholly silent as to how the public will should be organized to run the government as outlined. That was left to the vital element, the wishes of the people themselves. In a nation of 125,000,000 such organized machinery is as essential as the governmental machinery provided in the written Constitution, and has been of enormous influence on it. Who will run the government, and how, are as important as the form of government itself; and this is now determined almost wholly by the extraconstitutional machinery of party. All of this wide field of party machinery must be considered as part of the Constitution in its wider sense, but although created by the people and nominally subject to alteration according to their wish at any moment, it may well be questioned whether it has not become more inflexible than the narrower, older, and written part of the Constitution with its constant broadening by Supreme Court interpretation and other means.

Still another way in which the old Constitution is being rapidly changed is by the growth of *administrative law*. More than a dozen years ago an authority pointed out that this was fast changing our government in important departments from a government by law to a government by men. The complexity of modern conditions and the growth in the functions of the federal government have necessitated a vast delegation of powers from Congress to boards and commissions. Legislative bodies can, in many cases, no longer make laws so general, explicit, and detailed, as to meet the conditions. Much has to be left to interpretation by administrators, and it is probable that in the future, for good or evil, this may greatly alter the Constitution in its wide sense.

We have barely touched upon some of the many ways in which constitutional changes come about, considering the Constitution as the organization by means of which the citizen operates the government in order to ensure through it those "goods" which it is desired it should provide. I think we have said enough, however, to indicate that in spite of delays, or haltings in this part or that of the general machine, there is much more flexibility than is often claimed when badly drawn legislation is turned back, or when ardent groups cannot get what they want in just the way they want it rapidly enough to suit them. This last is very much the case in what some call our crisis at present, and as to which we shall probably hear much debate in the near future.

There may be in part a real crisis, but also in part it is a crisis which has been artificially and carelessly brought on.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Brooch

A STORY

By William Faulkner

THE telephone waked him. He waked already hurrying, fumbling in the dark for robe and slippers, because he knew before waking that the bed beside his own was still empty, and the instrument was down stairs just opposite the door beyond which his mother had lain propped upright in bed for five years, and he knew on waking that he would be too late because she would already have heard it, just as she heard everything that happened at any hour in the house.

She was a widow, he the only child. When he went away to college she went with him; she kept a house in Charlottesville, Virginia, for four years while he graduated. She was the daughter of a well-to-do merchant. Her husband had been a travelling man who came one summer to the town with letters of introduction: one to a minister, the other to her father. Three months later the travelling man and the daughter were married. His name was Boyd. He resigned his position within the year and moved into his wife's house and spent his days sitting in front of the hotel with the lawyers and the cotton-planters—a dark man with a gallant swaggering way of removing his hat to ladies. In the second year, the son was born. Six months later, Boyd departed. He just went away, leaving a note to his wife in which he told her that he could no longer bear to lie in bed at night and watch her rolling onto empty spools the string saved from parcels from the stores. His wife never heard of him again, though she refused to let her father have the marriage annulled and change the son's name.

Then the merchant died, leaving all his property to the daughter and the grandson who, though he had been out of Fauntleroy suits since he was seven or eight, at twelve wore even on weekdays clothes which made him look not like a child but like a midget; he probably could not have long associated with other children even if his mother had let him. In due time the mother found a boys' school where the boy could wear a round jacket and a man's hard hat with impunity, though by the time the two of them removed to Charlottesville for these next four years, the son did not look like a midget. He looked now like a character out of Dante—a man a little slighter than his father but with something of his father's dark handsomeness, who hurried with averted head, even when his mother was not with him, past the young girls on the streets not only of Charlottesville but of the little lost Mississippi hamlet to which they presently returned, with an expression of face like the young monks or angels in fifteenth-century allegories. Then his mother had her stroke, and presently the mother's friends brought to her bed reports of almost exactly the sort of girl which perhaps even the mother might have expected the son to become not only involved with but to marry.

Her name was Amy, daughter of a railroad conductor who had been killed in a wreck and who lived now with an aunt who kept a boarding-house—a vivid, daring girl whose later reputation was due more to folly and the caste handicap of the little Southern town than to badness and which at the last was doubtless more smoke than fire; whose name, though she always had invitations to the more public dances, was a light word, especially among the older women, daughters of decaying old houses like this in which her future husband had been born.

So presently the son had acquired some skill in entering the house and passing the door beyond which his mother lay propped in bed, and mounting the stairs in the dark to his own room. But one night he failed to do so. When he entered the house the transom above his mother's door was dark, as usual, and even if it had not been he could not have known that this was the afternoon on which the mother's friends had called and told her about Amy, and that his mother had lain for five hours, propped bolt upright, in the darkness, watching the invisible door. He entered quietly as usual, his shoes in his hand, yet he had not even closed the front door when she called his name. Her voice was not raised. She called his name once:

"Howard."

He opened the door. As he did so the lamp beside her bed came on. It sat on a table beside the bed; beside it sat a clock with a dead face; to stop it had been the first act of his mother when she could move her hands two years ago. He approached the bed from which she watched him—a thick woman with a face the color of tallow and dark eyes apparently both pupil-less and iris-less beneath perfectly white hair. "What?" he said. "Are you sick?"

"Come closer," she said. He came nearer. They looked at one another. Then he seemed to know; perhaps he had been expecting it.

"I know who's been talking to you," he said. "Those damned old buzzards."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I'm glad to hear it's carrion," she said. "Now I can rest easy that you won't bring it into our house."

"Go on. Say, your house."

"Not necessary. Any house where a lady lives." They looked at one another in the steady lamp which possessed that stale glow of sick room lights. "You are a man. I don't reproach you. I am not even surprised. I just want to warn you before you make yourself ridiculous. Don't confuse the house with the stable."

"With the — Hah!" he said. He stepped back and jerked the door open with something of his father's swaggering theatricalism. "With your permission," he said. He did not close the door. She lay bolt upright on the pillows and looked into the dark hall and listened to him go to the telephone, call the girl, and ask her to marry him tomorrow. Then he reappeared at the door. "With your permission," he said again, with that swaggering reminiscence of his father, closing the door. After a while the mother turned the light off. It was daylight in the room then.

They were not married the next day, however. "I'm scared to," Amy said. "I'm scared of your mother. What does she say about me?"

"I don't know. I never talk to her about you."

"You don't even tell her you love me?"

"What does it matter? Let's get married."

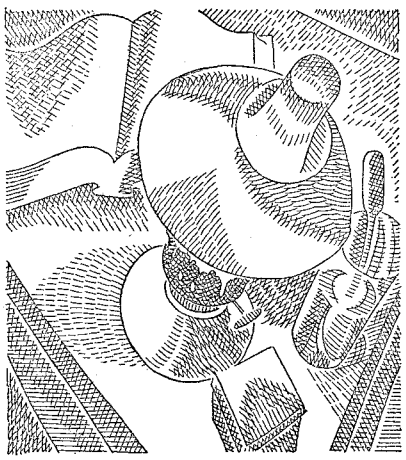
"And live there with her?" They looked at one another. "Will you go to work, get us a house of our own?"

"What for? I have enough money. And it's a big house."

"Her house. Her money."

"It'll be mine—ours some day. Please."

"Come on. Let's try to dance again." This was in the parlor of the boarding-house, where she was trying to teach him to dance, but without success. The music meant nothing to him; the noise of it or perhaps the touch of her body destroyed what little co-ordination he could have had. But he took her to the Country Club dances; they were known to be engaged. Yet she still staid out dances with other men, in the parked cars about the dark lawn. He tried to argue with her about it, and about drinking.



"Sit out and drink with me, then," he said.

"We're engaged. It's no fun with you."

"Yes," he said, with the docility with which he accepted each refusal; then he stopped suddenly and faced her. "What's no fun with me?" She fell back a little as he gripped her shoulder. "What's no fun with me?"

"Oh," she said. "You're hurting me!"

"I know it. What's no fun with me?"

Then another couple came up and he let her go. Then an hour later, during an intermission, he dragged her, screaming and struggling, out of a dark car and across the dance floor, empty now and lined with chaperones like a theater audience, and drew out a chair and took her across his lap and spanked her. By daylight they had driven twenty miles to another town and were married.

That morning Amy called Mrs. Boyd "Mother" for the first and (except one, and that perhaps shocked out of her by surprise or perhaps by exultation) last time, though the same day Mrs. Boyd formally presented Amy with the brooch: an ancient, clumsy thing, yet valuable. Amy carried it back to their room, and he watched her stand looking at it, perfectly cold, perfectly inscrutable. Then she put it into a drawer. She held it over the open drawer with two fingers and released it and then drew the two fingers across her thigh.

"You will have to wear it sometimes," Howard said.

"Oh, I will. I'll show my gratitude. Don't worry." Presently it seemed to him that she took pleasure in wearing it. That is, she began to wear it quite often. Then he realized that it was not pleasure but vindictive incongruity; she wore it for an entire week once on the bosom of a gingham house dress, an apron. But she always wore it where Mrs. Boyd would see it, always when she and Howard had dressed to go out and would stop in the mother's room to say good night.

They lived upstairs, where, a year later, their child was born. They took the child down for Mrs. Boyd to see it. She turned her head on the pillows and looked at the child once. "Ah," she said. "I never saw Amy's father, that I know of. But then, I never travelled on the train a great deal."

"The old — the old —" Amy cried, shuddering and clinging to Howard. "Why does she hate me so? What have I ever done to her? Let's move. You can work."

"No. She won't live always."

"Yes she will. She'll live forever, just to hate me."

"No," Howard said. In the next year the child died. Again Amy tried to get him to move.

"Anywhere. I won't care how we have to live."

"No. I can't leave her helpless on her back. You will have to start going out again. Dance. Then it won't be so bad."

"Yes," she said, quieter. "I'll have to. I can't stand this."

One said "you," the other, "I." Neither of them said "we." So, on Saturday nights Amy would dress and Howard would put on scarf and overcoat, sometimes over his shirtsleeves, and they would descend the stairs and stop at Mrs. Boyd's door and then Howard would put Amy into the car and watch her drive away. Then he would re-enter the house and with his shoes in his hand return up the stairs, as he had used to do before they married, slipping past the lighted transom. Just before midnight, in the overcoat and scarf again, he would slip back down the stairs and past the still lighted transom and be waiting on the porch when Amy drove up. Then they would enter the house and look into Mrs. Boyd's room and say good night.

One night it was one o'clock before she returned. He had been waiting for an hour in slippers and pajamas on the porch; it was November. The transom above Mrs. Boyd's door was dark and they did not stop.

"Some jelly beans set the clock back," she said. She did not look at him, drag-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ging her clothes off, flinging the brooch along with her other jewelry onto the dressing table. "I had hoped you wouldn't be fool enough to stand out there and wait for me."

"Maybe next time they set the clock back I won't."

She stopped, suddenly and perfectly still, looking at him over her shoulder. "Do you mean that?" she said. He was not looking at her; he heard, felt, her approach and stand beside him. Then she touched his shoulder. "Howard?" she said. He didn't move. Then she was clinging to him, flung onto his lap, crying wildly: "What's happening to us?" striking herself against him with a wild abandon: "What is it? What is it?" He held her quiet, though after they were each in their beds (they already had two of them) he heard and then felt her cross the intervening gap and fling herself against him again with that wild terrified abandon not of a woman but of a child in the dark, enveloping him, whispering: "You don't *have* to trust me, Howard! You can! You can! You don't *have* to!"

"Yes," he said. "I know. It's all right. It's all right." So after that, just before twelve, he would put on the overcoat and scarf, creep down the stairs and past the lighted transom, open and close the front door noisily, and then open his mother's door where the mother would be propped high on the pillows, the book open and face down on her knees.

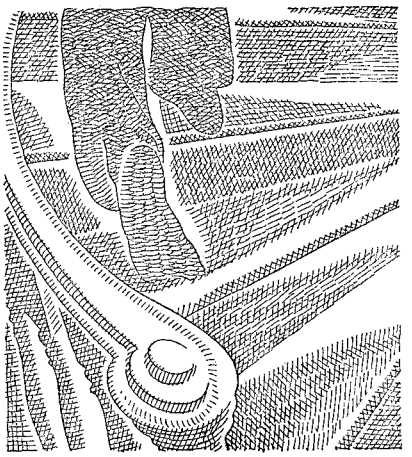
"Back already?" Mrs. Boyd would say.

"Yes. Amy's gone on up. Do you want anything?"

"No. Good night."

"Good night."

Then he would go up and go to bed, and after a time (sometimes) to sleep. But before this sometimes, taking it sometimes into sleep with him, he would think, tell himself with that quiet and fatalistic pessimism of the impotent intelligent: *But this cannot go on forever. Some night something is going to happen; she is going to catch Amy. And I know what she is going to do. But what am I going to do?* He believed that he did know. That is, the top of his mind assured him that it knew, but he discounted this; the intelligence again: not to bury it, flee from it: just discounting it, the intelligence speaking out of the impotence: *Because*



no man ever knows what he will do in any given situation, set of circumstances: the wise, others perhaps, drawing conclusions, but never himself. The next morning Amy would be in the other bed, and then, in the light of day, it would be gone. But now and then, even by daylight, it returned and he from the detachment of his cerebration contemplating his life, that faulty whole whose third the two of them had produced yet whose lack the two of them could not fill, telling himself, *Yes. I know what she will do and I know what Amy will ask me to do and I know that I will not do that. But what will I do?* but not for long, telling himself now that it had not happened so far, and that anyway it was six long days until Saturday: the impotence now, not even the intellect.

II

So it was that when he waked to the bell's shrilling he already knew that the bed beside his own was still empty, just as he knew that, no matter how quickly he reached the telephone, it would already be too late. He did not even wait for his slippers; he ran down the now icy stairs, seeing the transom above his mother's door come alight as he passed it and went to the phone and took the receiver down: "Oh, Howard, I'm so sorry—this is Martha Ross—so sorry to disturb you, but I knew that Amy would be anxious about it. I found it in the car, tell her, when we got back home."

"Yes," he said. "In the car."

"In our car. After she lost her switch key and we brought her home, to the corner. We tried to get her to come on home with us and have some ham and eggs, but she—" Then the voice died away. He held the cold receiver to his ear and heard the other end of the wire, the silence, fill with a sort of consternation like an indrawn breath: something instinctive and feminine and self-protective. But the pause itself was hardly a pause; almost immediately the voice went on, though completely changed now, blank, smooth, reserved: "Amy's in bed, I suppose."

"Yes. She's in bed."

"Oh. So sorry I bothered you, got you up. But I knew she would be anxious about it, since it was your mother's, the family piece. But of course, if she hasn't missed it yet, you won't need to bother her." The wire hummed, tense. "That I called or anything." The wire hummed. "Hello. Howard?"

"No," he said. "I won't bother her tonight. You can call her in the morning."

"Yes, I will. So sorry I bothered you. I hope I didn't wake your mother."

He put the receiver back. He was cold. He could feel his bare toes curling back from the icelike floor as he stood looking at the blank door beyond which his mother would be sitting, high-propped on the pillows, with her tallow face and dark inscrutable eyes and the hair which Amy said resembled weathered cotton, beside the clock whose hands she had stopped herself at ten minutes to four on the afternoon five years ago when she first moved again. When he opened the door his picture had been exact, almost to the position of the hands even.

"She is not in this house," Mrs. Boyd said.

"Yes. She's in bed. You know when we came in. She just left one of her rings with Martha Ross tonight and Martha telephoned."

But apparently she had not even listened to him. "So you swear she is in this house this minute."

"Yes. Of course she is. She's asleep, I tell you."

"Then send her down here to say good night to me."

"Nonsense. Of course I won't."

They looked at one another across the bed's footboard.

"You refuse?"

"Yes."

They looked at one another a moment longer. Then he began to turn away; he could feel her watching him.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

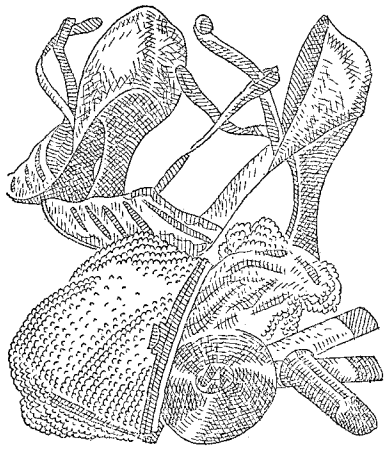
"Then tell me something else. It was the brooch she lost."

He did not answer this either. He just looked at her again as he closed the door: the two of them curiously similar, mortal and implacable foes in the fierce close antipathy of blood. He went out.

He returned to the bedroom and turned on the light and found his slippers and went to the fire and put some coal on the embers and punched and prodded it into flame. The clock on the mantel said twenty minutes to one. Presently he had a fair blaze; he had quit shivering. He went back to bed and turned off the light, leaving only the firelight pulsing and gleaming on the furniture and among the phials and mirrors of the dressing table, and in the smaller mirror above his own chest of drawers, upon which sat the three silver photograph frames, the two larger ones containing himself and Amy, the smaller one between them empty. He just lay. He was not thinking at all. He had just thought once, quietly, *So that's that. So now I suppose I will know, find out what I am going to do* and then no more, not even thinking that again.

The house seemed still to be filled with the shrill sound of the telephone like a stubborn echo. Then he began to hear the clock on the mantel, reiterant, cold, not loud. He turned on the light and took up the book face down and open from the table beside his pillow, but he found that he could not keep his mind on the words for the sound which the clock made, so he rose and went to the mantel. The hands were now at half past two. He stopped the clock and turned its face to the wall and brought his book to the fire and found that he could now keep his mind on the words, the sense, reading on now untroubled by time. So he could not have said just when it was that he found he had ceased to read, had jerked his head up. He had heard no sound, yet he knew that Amy was in the house. He did not know how he knew: he just sat holding his breath, immobile, the peaceful book raised and motionless, waiting. Then he heard Amy say, "It's me, Mother."

She said "Mother," he thought, not moving yet. *She called her "Mother" again.* He moved now, putting the book carefully down, his



place marked, but as he crossed the room he walked naturally, not trying to deaden his footsteps, to the door and opened it and saw Amy just emerging from Mrs. Boyd's room. She began to mount the stairs, walking naturally too, her hard heels sharp and unnaturally loud in the nightbound house. She must have stooped when Mother called her and put her slippers on again, he thought. She had not seen him yet, mounting steadily, her face in the dim hall light vague and petal-like against the collar of her fur coat, projecting already ahead of her to where he waited a sort of rosy and crystal fragrance of the frozen night out of which she had just emerged. Then she saw him at the head of the stairs. For just a second, an instant, she stopped dead still, though she was moving again before it could have been called pause, already speaking as she passed him where he stood aside, and entered the bedroom: "Is it very late? I was with the Rosses. They just let me out at the corner; I lost my car key out at the club. Maybe it was the car that waked her."

"No. She was already awake. It was the telephone."

She went on to the fire and spread her hands to it, still in her coat; she did not seem to have heard him, her face rosy in the firelight, her presence emanating that smell of cold, that frosty fragrance which had preceded her up the stairs: "I suppose so. Her light was already on. I knew as soon as I opened the front door that we were sunk. I hadn't even got in the house good when she said 'Amy' and I said 'It's me, Mother' and she said, 'Come in here, please,' and there she was with those eyes that haven't got any edges to them and that hair that looks like somebody pulled it out of the middle of a last year's cotton bale, and she said, 'Of course you understand that you will have to leave this house at once. Good night.'"

"Yes," he said. "She has been awake since about half past twelve. But there wasn't anything to do but insist that you were already in bed asleep and trust to luck."

"You mean, she hasn't been asleep at all?"

"No. It was the telephone, like I told you. About half past twelve."

With her hands still spread to the fire she glanced at him over her furred shoulder, her face rosy, her eyes at once bright and heavy, like a woman's eyes after pleasure, with a kind of inattentive conspiratorial commiseration. "Telephone? Here? At half past twelve? What absolutely putrid — But no matter." She turned now, facing him, as if she had only been waiting until she became warm, the rich coat open upon the fragile glitter of her dress; there was a quality actually beautiful about her now—not of the face whose impeccable replica looks out from the covers of a thousand magazines each month, nor of the figure, the shape of deliberately epicene provocation into which the miles of celluloid film have constricted the female body of an entire race; but a quality completely female in the old eternal fashion, primitive assured and ruthless as she approached him, already raising her arms. "Yes! I say luck too!" she said, putting her arms around him, her upper body leaned back to look into his face, her own face triumphant, the smell now warm woman-odor where the frosty fragrance had thawed. "She said at once, now. So we can go. You see? Do you understand? We can leave now. Give her the money, let her have it all. We won't care. You can find work; I won't care how and where we will have to live. You don't have to stay here now, with her now. She has —what do you call it? absolved you herself. Only I have lost the car key. But no matter: we can walk. Yes, walk; with nothing, taking nothing of hers, like we came here."

"Now?" he said. "Tonight?"

"Yes! She said at once. So it will have to be tonight."

"No," he said. That was all, no in-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dication of which question he had answered, which denied. But then, he did not need to because she still held him; it was only the expression of her face that changed. It did not die yet nor even become terrified yet: it just became unbelieving, like a child's incredulity. "You mean, you still won't go? You still won't leave her? That you would just take me to the hotel for tonight and that you will come back here tomorrow? Or do you mean you won't even stay at the hotel with me tonight? That you will take me there and leave me and then you—" She held him, staring at him; she began to say, "Wait, wait. There must be some reason, something— Wait," she cried; "wait! You said, telephone. At half past twelve." She still stared at him, her hands hard, her pupils like pinpoints, her face ferocious. "That's it. That's the reason. Who was it that telephoned here about me? Tell me! I defy you to! I will explain it. Tell me!"

"It was Martha Ross. She said she had just let you out at the corner."

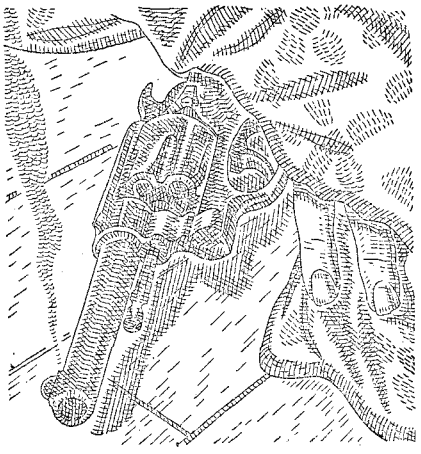
"She lied!" she cried at once, immediately, scarce waiting to hear the name. "She lied! They did bring me home then but it was still early and so I decided to go on with them to their house and have some ham and eggs. So I called to Frank before he got turned around and I went with them. Frank will prove it! She lied! They just this minute put me out at the corner!"

She looked at him. They stared at one another for a full immobile moment. Then he said, "Then where is the brooch?"

"The brooch?" she said. "What brooch?" But already he had seen her hand move upward beneath the coat; besides, he could see her face and watch it gape like that of a child which has lost its breath before she began to cry with a wild yet immobile abandon, so that she spoke through the weeping in the choked gasping of a child, with complete and despairing surrender: "Oh, Howard! I wouldn't have done that to you! I wouldn't have! I wouldn't have!"

"All right," he said. "Hush, now. Hush, Amy. She will hear you."

"All right. I'm trying to." But she still faced him with that wrung and curiously rigid face beneath its incredible flow of moisture, as though not the



eyes but all the pores had sprung at once; now she too spoke directly out of thinking, without mention of subject or circumstance, nothing more of defiance or denial: "Would you have gone with me if you hadn't found out?"

"No. Not even then. I won't leave her. I will not, until she is dead. Or this house. I won't. I can't. I—" They looked at one another, she staring at him as if she saw reflected in his pupils not herself but the parchment-colored face below stairs—the piled dirty white hair, the fierce implacable eyes—her own image blanked out by something beyond mere blindness: by a quality determined, invincible, and crucified.

"Yes," she said. From somewhere she produced a scrap of chiffon and began to dab at her eyes, delicately, even now by instinct careful of the streaked mascara. "She beat us. She lay there in that bed and beat us." She turned and went to the closet and drew out an overnight bag and put the crystal objects from the dressing-table into it and opened a drawer. "I can't take everything tonight. I will have to——"

He moved also, from the chest of drawers where the small empty photograph frame sat he took his wallet and removed the bills from it and returned and put the money into her hand. "I don't think there is very much here. But you won't need money until tomorrow."

"Yes," she said. "You can send the rest of my things then, too."

"Yes," he said. She folded and smoothed the notes in her fingers; she was not looking at him. He did not know what she was looking at except it was not at the money. "Haven't you got a purse or something to carry it in?"

"Yes," she said. But she did not stop folding and smoothing the bills, still not looking at them, apparently not aware of them, as if they had no value and she had merely picked them idly up without being aware of it. "Yes," she said. "She beat us. She lay there in that bed she will never move from until they come in and carry her out some day, and took that brooch and beat us both." Then she began to cry. It was as quiet now as the way she had spoken. "My little baby," she said. "My dear little baby."

He didn't even say Hush now. He just waited until she dried her eyes again, almost briskly, rousing, looking at him with an expression almost like smiling, her face, the make-up, the careful evening face haggard and streaked and filled with the weary and peaceful aftermath of tears. "Well," she said. "It's late." She stooped, but he anticipated her and took the bag; they descended the stairs together; they could see the lighted transom above Mrs. Boyd's door.

"It's too bad you haven't got the car," he said.

"Yes. I lost the key at the club. But I telephoned the garage. They will bring it in in the morning."

They stopped in the hall while he telephoned for a cab. Then they waited, talking quietly now and then. "You had better go straight to bed."

"Yes. I'm tired. I danced a good deal."

"What was the music? Was it good?"

"Yes. I don't know. I suppose so. When you are dancing yourself, you don't usually notice whether the music is or isn't."

"Yes, I guess that's so." Then the car came. They went out to it, he in pajamas and robe; the earth was frozen and iron-hard, the sky bitter and brilliant. He helped her in.

"Now you run back into the house," she said. "You didn't even put on your overcoat."

"Yes. I'll get your things to the hotel early."

"Not too early. Run, now." She had already sat back, the coat close about her. He had already remarked how sometime, at some moment back in the bedroom, the warm woman-odor had congealed again and that she now emanated once more that faint frosty fragrance, fragile, impermanent and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

forlorn; the car moved away, he did not look back. As he was closing the front door his mother called his name. But he did not pause or even glance toward the door. He just mounted the stairs, out of the dead, level, unsleeping peremptory voice. The fire had burned down: a strong rosy glow, peaceful and quiet and warmly reflected from mirror and polished wood. The book still lay, face down and open, in the chair. He took it up and went to the table between the two beds and sought and found the cellophane envelope which had once contained pipe cleaners, which he used for a bookmark, and marked his place and put the book down. It was the coat-pocket size, Modern Library *Green Mansions*. He had discovered the book during adolescence; he had read it ever since. During that period he read only the part about the journey of the three people in search of the Riolama which did not exist, seeking this part out and reading it in secret as the normal boy would have normal and conventional erotica or obscenity, mounting the barren mountain with Rima toward the cave, not knowing then that it was the cave-symbol which he sought, escaping it at last through the same desire and need to flee and escape which Rima had, following her on past the cave to where she poised, not even waiting for him, impermanent as a match flame and as weak, in the cold and ungrieving moon. In his innocence then he believed, with a sort of urgent and despairing joy, that the mystery about her was not mystery since it was physical: that she was corporeally impenetrable, incomplete; with peaceful despair justifying, vindicating, what he was through (so he believed) no fault of his own, with what he read in books, as the young do. But after his marriage he did not read the book again until the child died and the Saturday nights began. And then he avoided the journey to Riolama as he had used to seek it out. Now he read only where Abel (the one man on earth who knew that he was alone) wandered in the impervious and interdict forest filled with the sound of birds. Then he went to the chest and opened again the drawer where he kept the wallet and stood for a moment, his hand still lying on the edge of the drawer. "Yes," he said quietly, aloud: "it seems to have been right all the time about what I will do."

The bathroom was at the end of the hall, built onto the house later, warm too where he had left the electric heater on for Amy and they had forgot it. It was here that he kept his whiskey also. He had begun to drink after his mother's stroke, in the beginning of what he had believed to be his freedom, and since the death of the child he had begun to keep a two-gallon keg of corn whiskey in the bathroom. Although it was detached from the house proper and the whole depth of it from his mother's room, he nevertheless stuffed towels carefully about and beneath the door, and then removed them and returned to the bedroom and took the down coverlet from Amy's bed and returned and stuffed the door again and then hung the coverlet before it. But even then he was not satisfied. He stood there, thoughtful, musing, a little pudgy (he had never taken any exercise since he gave up trying to learn to dance, and now what with the steady drinking, there was little of the young Italian novice about his figure any more), the pistol hanging from his hand. He began to look about. His glance fell upon the bath mat folded over the edge of the tub. He wrapped his hand, pistol and all, in the mat and pointed it toward the rear wall and fired it, the report muffled and jarring though not loud. Yet even now he stood and listened as if he expected to hear from this distance. But he heard nothing; even when, the door freed again, he moved quietly down the hall and then down the steps to where he could see clearly the dark transom above his mother's door. But again he did not pause. He returned up the stairs, quietly, hearing the cold and impotent ratiocination without listening to it: *Like your father, you cannot seem to live with either of them, but unlike your father you cannot seem to live without them*; telling himself quietly, "Yes, it seems that it was right. It seems to have known us better than I did," and he shut the bathroom door again and stuffed the towels carefully about and beneath it. But he did not hang the coverlet this time. He drew it over himself, squatting, huddling into it, the muzzle of the pistol between his teeth like a pipe, wadding the thick soft coverlet about his head, hurrying, moving swiftly now because he was already beginning to suffocate.

RAY

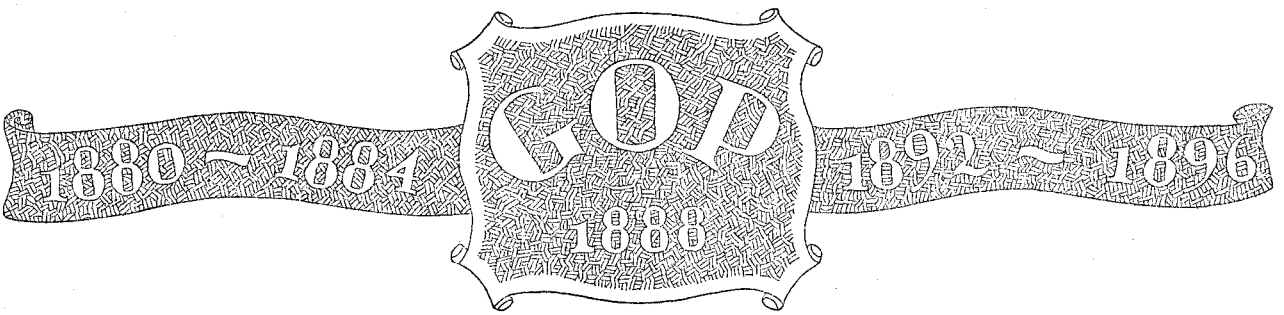
By Josephine Miles

RAY, once word for the fine archaic sunbeam,
For the long classic dignified descent,
The spear's flight, the solid god's bestowal,
Is what you meant.

Meant, meant, and are now despaired of meaning,
And are now contestable and counterfeit,
And wax or wane: yet are the world's lighting
And god of it.

You are the lost Phœbus blown round heaven,
Without cloak, without chariot, yet made
Lord of more spacious kingdoms though less splendid,
In their proud undistinguishable livery arrayed.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Across the Busy Years

Fourteen Republican Conventions

By Nicholas Murray Butler

I. Garfield, Blaine, Harrison, McKinley

President Butler has attended every Republican Convention since 1876. At most of them he was a delegate and in many of them he played an important part. He begins a record of these conventions, containing not only hitherto unpublished material of historical value but views of prominent men and interesting sidelights on how presidential nominations are made

THAT happening in our American political life which most clearly and most fully reveals the nation's political habits and the forces which are either permanently or temporarily at work in shaping our public policies, is the quadrennial national convention of each of the two great political parties, Democrat and Republican. Many thousand persons have attended at least one such convention. Probably several hundred persons have been members of two such conventions or more. A few score persons have been members of three or four such conventions. My experience is probably unique in that it covers attendance upon fourteen national conventions of the Republican party, including membership in most of them, as well as upon two conventions of the Democrat party. When the Fifteenth Republican National Convention met in Chicago on June 18, 1912, on comparing notes it was found that but four of the members of that convention, which was composed of 1550 delegates, had also been members of the Convention of 1888, held in Chicago nearly a quarter-century earlier. These were former Senator Powell Clayton of Arkansas, former Governor Henry C. Warmoth of Louisiana, Henry W. Bishop of Florida, and myself.

It is at these gatherings that political enthusiasm as well as political antagonism and political bitterness reach the boiling point. Only a small portion of what really takes place appears in the newspapers or on the printed page of the published official reports of the proceedings of these conventions. The work of the convention is really directed, and the results arrived at are really planned and achieved, by a substantially unbroken series, or several series, of private conferences which go on, now here now there. It is at such times that men whose names are little heard by the public, but who hold important posts in the party organization in various states, come into their own. Time and again such men influence and have influenced the outcome of a convention far more than any holder of high public office. With no inconsiderable public reputation to support them, these high public officers are used as figureheads by the really controlling participants in the drama which is being enacted. The purpose of it all is the nomination for President of the United States of the preferred choice of the ruling group, this to be accomplished if possible without alienating or incurring the resentment of those elements in the party organization that are otherwise minded. To nominate a candidate in a Republican Convention requires only a clear majority of the total membership of the convention, whereas in a Democratic National Convention it is prescribed that a two-thirds vote is needed. It was the application of this rule which prevented the nomination of Champ Clark at Baltimore in 1912 instead of Woodrow Wilson.

1880

By far the most impressive and most exciting convention at which I have been present was the very first in order, that of 1880, which met at Chicago on June 2 and which, after the most desperate of battles between those on the one hand who were insistent on the nomination of General Grant for a third term and those on the other who were the eager and impassioned supporters of James G. Blaine, resulted in the nomination of General Garfield. Not only was this convention of outstanding importance from the point of view of our American political habits and happenings, but its constitution was most exceptional. There sat among its members no fewer than three men destined to become President of the United States: James A. Garfield of Ohio, Chester A. Arthur of New York, and Benjamin Harrison of Indiana. Senator Logan of Illinois was there, not knowing that he would be nominated for the Vice-Presidency four years later. By his side sat Emery A. Storrs, a leader of the Illinois bar. J. S. Clarkson of Iowa had with him a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

future Speaker of the House, David B. Henderson of Dubuque. Senator Plumb of Kansas was there, as were William O. Bradley of Kentucky, Senators Eugene Hale and William P. Frye of Maine, Senator George F. Hoar and George F. Boutwell of Massachusetts, Senator Omar D. Conger of Michigan, Senator Dwight M. Sabin of Minnesota, Senator Blanche R. Bruce of Mississippi, Chauncey I. Filley of St. Louis, Senator William M. Chandler of New Hampshire, Senator William J. Sewell, George A. Halsey and Walter William Phelps of New Jersey, Senator Roscoe Conkling, Benjamin F. Tracy, Levi P. Morton, Thomas C. Platt, Alonzo B. Cornell, and Stewart L. Woodford of New York, Charles Foster and Benjamin Butterworth of Ohio, Senator John H. Mitchell of Oregon, Senator Matthew Stanley Quay of Pennsylvania, Governor Billings of Vermont, and Senator Philetus C. Sawyer and Senator Isaac Stevenson of Wisconsin, and many more of large political influence and importance. It may well be doubted whether so distinguished a company of men had been assembled in the United States at any time since the Constitutional Convention of 1787 met at Philadelphia.

From the instant that the convention was called to order the atmosphere was charged with political electricity. Everyone knew that something exciting must soon happen and all were intent not to miss the happening when it came. They did not have long to wait. After Senator Hoar of Massachusetts, distinguished, dignified, and impartial, had been unanimously chosen to serve as temporary chairman of the convention, the roll of states and territories was called. By accident the territory of Utah was omitted. It so happened that the National Committee had voted to place upon the roll of the convention two delegates from Utah whose seats were contested by supporters of General Grant. So soon as the omission was noticed, Senator Frye of Maine, whose voice rang throughout the great convention hall like a trumpet and who was at the moment seated upon the platform, jumped to his feet, stated that the territory of Utah had been omitted by accident and asked that it be now called. Senator Hoar repeated to the convention the request of Senator Frye and asked if there was any objection to its being granted. It was pretty generally assumed, both by members of the convention and by the vast audience, that since the facts were undoubtedly correctly stated by Senator Frye, unanimous consent would be given; but from his place on the main aisle of the convention hall there arose slowly and with great dignity and impressiveness the stately form of Senator Roscoe Conkling of New York. All eyes were upon him as he straightened his body to its extreme height, and then in silence lifted his right hand and slowly bringing it down to the level of his eye, pointed it straight at the chair, said: "Mr. Chairman, there *is* objection." This was the signal for the first outburst. The battle had begun and its first gun had been fired. From that instant until the work of the convention was over the nerves of the convention, its members, and its audience were never relaxed for an instant.

It has usually been said that General Garfield was nominated primarily as the result of the very eloquent and noble paragraph with which he opened his speech placing the name of John Sherman of Ohio in nomination. When that speech was made the convention had been in storm and tempest throughout four days and nights. Nothing equal to the long continued cheering, shouting, and marching about by the followers of Grant and of Blaine had ever before been seen. It was this fact which gave profound impressiveness to these words with which General Garfield opened his nominating speech:

> I have witnessed the extraordinary scenes of this convention with deep solicitude. Nothing touches my heart more quickly than a tribute of honor to a great and noble character; but as I sat in my seat and witnessed this demonstration, this assemblage seemed to me a human ocean in tempest. I have seen the sea lashed into fury and tossed into spray, and its grandeur moves the soul of the dullest man; but I remember that it is not the billows, but the calm level of the sea from which all heights and depths are measured.
>
> When the storm has passed and the hour of calm settles on the ocean, when the sun-light bathes its peaceful surface, then the astronomer and surveyor take the level from which they measure all terrestrial heights and depths.
>
> Gentlemen of the Convention, your present temper may not mark the healthful pulse of our people. When your enthusiasm has passed, when the emotions of this hour have subsided, we shall find below the storm and passion that calm level of public opinion from which the thoughts of a mighty people are to be measured, and by which their final action will be determined.
>
> Not here, in this brilliant circle where 15,000 men and women are gathered, is the destiny of the Republic to be decreed for the next four years. Not here, where I see the enthusiastic faces of 756 delegates, waiting to cast their lots into the urn and determine the choice of the Republic; but by four millions of Republican firesides, where the thoughtful voters, with wives and children about them, with the calm thoughts inspired by love of home and country, with the history of the past, the hopes of the future, and reverence for the great men who have adorned and blessed our nation in days gone by, burning in their hearts—*there* God prepares the verdict which will determine the wisdom of our work tonight. Not in Chicago, in the heat of June, but at the ballot-boxes of the Republic, in the quiet of November, after the silence of deliberate judgment, will this question be settled.

Splendid as these words were and great as was the effect which they had upon the convention, General Garfield had earlier in its proceedings made the impression which finally turned the convention's eyes and thought to him as its candidate.

Without any particular congruity, Senator Conkling arose in his place on Friday morning, June 4, and offered the following very innocent-looking resolution:

> *Resolved,* As the sense of this Convention, that every member of it is bound in honor to support its nominee, whoever that nominee may be; and that no man should hold a seat here who is not ready so to agree.

Delegates wondered what the reason for this was, but thinking it wholly innocent, proceeded to answer to the roll call which was demanded. Wyoming had not then been admitted to the Union, so that West Virginia was the last state to be called. Every state voted unanimously "Aye" until the name of West Virginia was read by the Secretary. Then the high tempered chairman of the delegation, Archie Campbell, the well-known editor of *The Wheeling Intelligencer,* replied with emphasis, "West Virginia casts seven votes 'Aye' and three votes 'No.'"

At once there was commotion, which was renewed when the Secretary announced the vote on this resolution to be "Ayes" 753, "Noes" 3. Without an instant's delay Senator Conkling was on his feet and offered this resolution:

> *Resolved,* That the delegates who have voted that they will not abide the action of the Convention, do not deserve, and have forfeited, their votes in this Convention.

He met his match in Archie Campbell, who proceeded in most vigorous and emphatic fashion to say that he and two of his associates on the delegation did not approve of the resolution and would not vote for it. He went on to say that they proposed to support the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nominee of the convention, but would not fail to register their dissent from Senator Conkling's motion. As Conkling pressed his point, Campbell returned to the attack upon him with great vigor. He recalled that both he and Conkling had been delegates to the Republican National Convention held at Cincinnati in 1876, that neither his candidate nor the candidate of Senator Conkling had been nominated, but that he, Campbell, had gone upon the stump for many weeks urging the election of the candidate chosen by that convention, while Conkling had had important business abroad which prevented his taking part in the campaign. It was then that Garfield intervened. Speaking with the utmost impressiveness and in quiet fashion, he asked Conkling to withdraw his resolution. Garfield went on to say that the three dissenting delegates from West Virginia had not stated that they would not support the candidate of the convention, quite the contrary, but simply that they did not like this resolution. "If, therefore," said Garfield, "these three delegates are to be expelled from the convention, must we not after every roll call pause to expel the minority until finally the convention is reduced to two delegates who must settle matters between themselves by physical force?" The humor and good sense of this appeal and the quiet way in which it was made, profoundly impressed the convention, and from that instant Garfield became one of its heroes. Conkling withdrew his resolution.

Still another incident of 1880 was that attendant upon the speech by Conkling placing General Grant in nomination. The result of the work of the convention up to that time had been a great disappointment to the supporters of General Grant. They had begun to feel that he could not possibly be nominated. It was whispered about the convention and in the hotel corridors that Conkling was planning some coup and would bring about the nomination of a friend and supporter of General Grant in any event. Therefore, when he arose to make his nominating speech while there was some applause, quiet soon reigned, for the listening thousands were on the *qui vive* to hear just what Conkling would say and whether or not he was to present some other name than that of Grant. Conkling himself then did a very unbecoming and ill-mannered act. Just in front of the platform of the convention, from which every other person who had addressed the delegates had spoken, was a long broad table where the newspaper men were assembled. There were scores of them, each with his writing materials and his records. Instead of going up on the convention platform Conkling climbed up on this press table, which was on a level perhaps two feet lower than the platform itself, and walking over all the papers which the table contained, he pushed everything right and left with one foot to make an open space on which to stand, and then looking defiantly into the faces of the delegates, he relieved them of all further suspense by these famous opening words:

> And when asked what State he hails from,
> Our sole reply shall be,
> He hails from Appomattox,
> And its famous apple tree.

All uncertainty was then removed. General Grant was in nomination and the fight on his behalf was to be carried through to the bitter end, and so it was.

The balloting, which began on the morning of Monday, June 7, continued until after midday on Tuesday, June 8, when General Garfield was nominated on the thirty-sixth ballot. The vote for General Grant, which was 304 on the first ballot, rose to 308 on the tenth, and to its maximum of 313 on the thirty-fifth, but 379 votes were needed to nominate. The stalwart 306 were recorded on the list in favor of General Grant's nomination on the last ballot. The vote for Mr. Blaine, which began at 284, rose to 285 on the thirteenth and fourteenth ballots, fell to 257 on the thirty-fifth ballot, and was but 42 on the final ballot, most of the Blaine votes having been transferred to General Garfield.

This struggle was most extraordinary by reason of its intensity and its bitterness. It left very deep marks on the Republican party organization, but it did not prevent General Garfield's election in November. It finally settled the principle that each congressional district was entitled to its own representation, and that no state-wide convention could deprive it of that privilege.

At this convention my father was a delegate from the old Fifth District of New Jersey, comprising the counties of Bergen, Passaic, and Morris. As an undergraduate at Columbia, much below the voting age, and doing work occasionally for the old *New York Tribune* in order to help pay my college expenses, I went with him to the convention and was attached to *The Tribune* staff there. As I recall, this staff consisted of seven persons and was under the direction of Count Seckendorff, then the very able and accomplished representative of *The Tribune* at Washington. The job assigned me was to watch for personal incidents on the floor of the convention and in the hotel lobby, and to note anything which seemed either dramatic or important. There was plenty to do. In addition to serving *The New York Tribune,* I was also commissioned by Mr. George Wurts, an intimate friend of my father, who was editor of *The Paterson* (N. J.) *Daily Press,* the evening Republican paper in my home town, to send a dispatch each day at noon, giving all details which would be of special interest to the people of New Jersey because of happenings in the delegation from that State. These two assignments kept me relatively busy, but the convention itself had an interest so unbroken and so absorbing that every detail of it has remained carved in memory from that day to this.

1884

Contrasted with the Convention of 1880 or even with that of 1888 which followed it, the gathering which met at Chicago in 1884 was quiet indeed. The nomination of Mr. Blaine was pretty much taken for granted, although the opposition to him was vigorous to the point of extreme bitterness. It is not often that the man chosen by the Republican National Committee to become temporary chairman of a convention is displaced for another, but just this happened in 1884. The well-known Powell Clayton of Arkansas, when nominated by the Republican National Committee, was opposed by Henry Cabot Lodge, George William Curtis, and Theodore Roosevelt, who made his first appearance as a delegate to one of these national gatherings. He had just gotten started as a vigorous member of the New York State Assembly. These men proposed the name of John R. Lynch of Mississippi, a colored delegate, and after

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

some display of oratory elected him by a small majority over Clayton. Otherwise, the work of the convention went forward without very much excitement, the Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions being William McKinley of Ohio, this being, likewise, his first appearance as a delegate.

In 1884, as four years earlier, I was once more on the staff of *The New York Tribune* and also sent dispatches relative to the New Jersey delegation and its happenings to *The Paterson* (N. J.) *Daily Press*.

1888

The Convention of 1888 was the only one within my recollection which met in a relatively small hall. It assembled June 19 at Chicago in the Auditorium, then newly completed and adjoining the hotel of the same name. The total number who could be seated in that theater could hardly have exceeded 4000, so that any such tempestuous demonstrations as had marked the Convention of 1880 and were to mark the Convention of 1912 were quite impossible.

This was the first National Convention of which I was a member. My election was as alternate delegate from the Fifth District of New Jersey, but my principal having been taken ill on the very same day that the convention met, I succeeded to his place and served throughout all the sessions of the convention.

Of all the conventions that I have known, this is the only one which was really deliberative so far as its choice of a nominee for the Presidency was concerned. General Harrison, whom every one greatly respected but few liked, received 85 votes on the first ballot, this number being exceeded by those cast for John Sherman, 229, Chauncey M. Depew, 99. General Russell A. Alger received 84, Senator Allison of Iowa 72, while 35 were still stubbornly cast for Mr. Blaine, despite his frequently repeated statement that he did not wish to be voted for. To nominate 417 votes were needed. The more the leaders of the convention considered the situation which confronted them, the more strongly were they led to the conclusion that of all the candidates before them Benjamin Harrison would make the most competent and the ablest President of the United States.

The so-called Granger States, led by Iowa, were in violent opposition to Chauncey Depew because he was president of a railroad. After he had withdrawn his name, he visited the headquarters of the Iowa delegation and aroused their unbounded enthusiasm by a speech which he addressed to them as his "Fellow Grangers," and in which he gave them information in detail and very specifically as to what the Chicago and Northwestern Railway and its operation meant to the people and the farmers of the State of Iowa. It was an amusing incident and one which illustrates admirably the contradictions and superficialities of so-called practical politics.

When Saturday came, the convention decided to adjourn over Sunday in order that serious and intimate consideration might be given to the selection of a candidate. A Committee of Five went over to Indianapolis by night train, met General Harrison on Sunday afternoon, discussed the whole situation with him, returned to Chicago and as a result he was nominated on the third ballot Monday morning. General Harrison's defects as a politician were so obvious and his manner was frequently so ungracious, that his outstanding intellectual ability was often overlooked. Surely there had been no occupant of the White House since John Quincy Adams, who was superior to Benjamin Harrison in sheer intellectual power.

This convention was marked by great bitterness aroused over the struggle between the two factions in Virginia, the one led by General William Mahone and the other by John S. Wise. Their abuse of each other was unbounded and their fiery eloquence both interested the convention and called out demonstrations of great enthusiasm. It was here that we first heard the story of General Mahone, which was told many times afterward on the stump in the State of Virginia, particularly, I believe, by Senator Daniels. General Mahone, so the story goes, having passed from earth, presented himself at the gates of the Heavenly City and knocked for admittance. The Apostle Peter, who was in charge, opened the door on a crack and asked the General what might be his name. "General William Mahone," was the answer, "from Virginia." "General Mahone, are you on foot or mounted?" "On foot," replied the General. "You cannot enter," was the answer of Peter. General Mahone turned away and shortly espied in the distance a colored man also making for the gates of the Heavenly City. The General explained to the colored man that there would be no hope of his entering unless he were mounted, but that if he would get down on his hands and knees and let the General sit astride of him, when they reached the heavenly gates, the General being mounted would be allowed to enter and the colored man being his horse, so to speak, would enter with him and all would be well. But, the story continued, when General Mahone, thus mounted, presented himself at the gates of the Heavenly City for a second time, he was asked his name and whether he was on foot or mounted. When he confidently replied, "Mounted," the answer came, "Tie your horse outside, General Mahone, and come in." This, it was pointed out, was characteristic of General Mahone's attitude toward the colored man. He would use him for his personal purposes, but beyond that nothing would happen. The story, well told, created great hilarity among the delegates.

There is one intensely interesting incident of this convention which has no place in the printed record of its proceedings. It has to do with Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, then at the very apex of his fame and influence as an orator. Although not a delegate to the convention, Colonel Ingersoll was seated on the platform and several times when there was a lull in the proceedings there were loud calls for him to speak. On one occasion he did so. This was on the afternoon of Friday, June 22, when the convention adjourned until evening after a very brief session, leaving the delegates disappointed and unhappy because there was nothing to keep them interested or entertained. So just as soon as the motion for a recess had been carried, there were loud shouts for Ingersoll, who then arose to address the assembled multitude, both delegates and audience remaining in their seats to hear him. To the great surprise of every one, instead of speaking in general terms on some political topic, he plunged into an enthusiastic eulogy of Judge Walter Q.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Gresham of Indiana, who was one of the candidates before the convention. This was so unfair and in so indescribably bad taste, Colonel Ingersoll not himself being a member of the convention, that immediately there was an outburst of objections and interruptions. This demonstration was so substantially unanimous that after speaking two or three minutes, Colonel Ingersoll was driven from the platform and the crowd dispersed. It was quite certain that never before in his life had he had such an experience, but he deserved it.

1892

In 1892 the convention met at Minneapolis under conditions which may properly be described as rather nervous. There seemed to be no escape from the nomination of General Harrison for a second term, and yet it was felt that his re-election was, to say the least, doubtful in high degree. The strong Blaine sentiment still remained in the party organization and nothing that Blaine himself could say, do, or write would prevent the continual mention of his name and the urging of him as a candidate for the presidency.

William McKinley, who had appeared at two previous conventions and had each time served as chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, had a very strong hold on the Republican Party of that day and when introduced to the convention as its permanent chairman, he was received with almost boundless enthusiasm. Indeed, as many as 182 delegates, chiefly from Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, insisted on voting for him on the one ballot which was required to renominate General Harrison. After the convention had adjourned, a group of some ten or a dozen of us assembled in Major McKinley's rooms at the Hotel West where he was lying on the bed, fanning himself vigorously and resting after his labors as chairman of the convention. While we were talking matters over, the door opened and in came Mark Hanna, dripping with perspiration and looking very much fatigued. He walked up to the bed on which McKinley was lying and said, "Well, William, that is what I call a damn tight squeak!" He had been greatly alarmed lest McKinley should be the nominee of the convention, since he foresaw defeat in November and had made his plans to nominate McKinley later on when the outlook would be more favorable.

1896

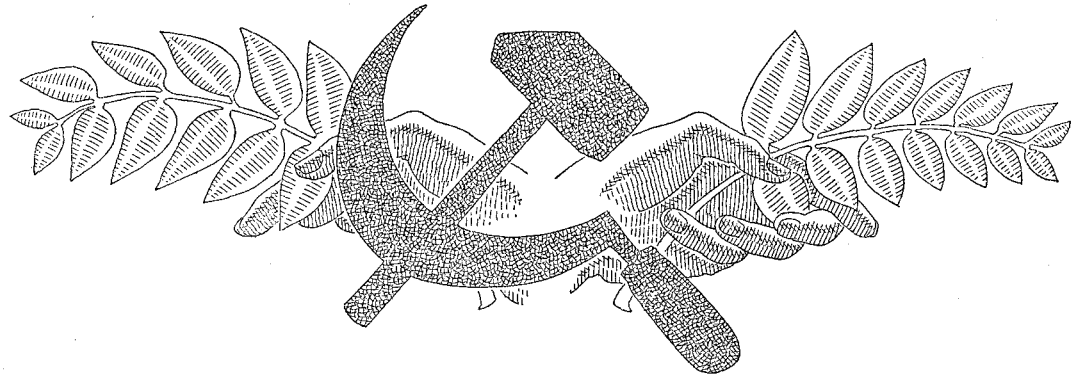
That time came at St. Louis four years later where the crucial contest was not so much over the presidential nomination as over the so-called gold plank in the platform. The pressure upon Hanna from either side of those who carried on this bitter controversy was as strong as can well be imagined. The advocates of bimetallism and of free coinage of silver were numerous and influential. Their opponents were still more numerous and still more influential, and the fight waxed hot as the time for the delegates to assemble approached.

Probably two dozen persons have told the world that they, individually, were responsible for the gold plank in the platform of 1896. The exact facts may now be told with propriety. The convention was to meet on Tuesday, June 16, and Charles W. Fairbanks of Indiana, soon to be Senator, had been agreed upon as the temporary chairman. On the Saturday preceding there were present in Mark Hanna's rooms, when he finally agreed to accept the gold plank, just five persons and no more. These were Mr. Hanna himself, former Governor W. R. Merriam of Minnesota, Henry C. Payne of Wisconsin, H. H. Kohlsaat of Chicago, and myself. If any one man deserves credit for the gold plank in the platform of 1896 it is Payne of Wisconsin, whose way of stating the question at issue and whose insistence upon its political importance were very convincing. Governor Merriam and Mr. Kohlsaat were equally emphatic, and finally, after Mark Hanna had had his famous long distance talk with McKinley at Canton—which is often said to have been the first long distance telephone call of the kind—and McKinley had agreed to accept whatever plank Hanna thought best, he announced at the end of three or four hours of discussion that he would accept the gold plank. He added that not a word must be said about it until the following Tuesday since he was afraid of the effect of his decision on the support of McKinley from the states west of the Missouri River. He added that only one delegate from that section, and he a German from Nebraska, was in favor of a gold plank and that great care must be taken lest the McKinley forces be disrupted. Whatever may have been the personal views of Henry Cabot Lodge, of Thomas C. Platt, or a score of others, no one of them had anything whatever to do with the plank itself as it was presented to Hanna and accepted by him before any of these gentlemen had reached St. Louis.

The nominee of this convention for the Vice-Presidency was my father's friend and mine, Garret A. Hobart of Paterson, New Jersey, then the very effective head of the Republican party organization in that state. He constantly expressed great disappointment with me because I would not yield to his persistent persuasion to turn my back upon the career which I had chosen and enter, with his support and that of the party organization, upon one of holding public office. He drew most fascinating pictures of possibilities, first at Trenton and, later, at Washington, but I was obdurate. During the short time that he served as Vice-President he proved to be the best presiding officer that the United States Senate has ever had in my lifetime and probably the best in the whole history of that highly self-conscious body.

Senator Henry M. Teller of Colorado, who marched out of this convention at the head of his supporting group, was a very pathetic spectacle and aroused the deepest sympathy among the delegates. He had been a lifelong and devoted member of the Republican Party and it cut him to the quick to find that an issue of principle had arisen on which he felt so strongly that he must withdraw from the convention. He carried with him the sympathy and in large part the affection of most of the delegates, who profoundly regretted that any question of principle or policy could cut so deep into the party organization. Such was the case, however, and had not Hanna conducted the campaign in the way in which he did, particularly in the states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, Bryan would have been elected in the following November on his free silver platform. Had the vote been taken early in September, Bryan would almost certainly have been elected.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Communist False Fronts

By Eugene Lyons

Does Moscow's new united front, offering collaboration with liberal and radical groups to fight fascism, mean that the League against War and Fascism and other "innocents' clubs" will pass out of communist control in return for support of the present Soviet régime?

THERE was a cosmic belly-laugh in the spectacle of the Roosevelt Administration protesting vehemently against Moscow's alleged sponsoring of world revolution just after the recent congress of the Third or Communist International had, in substance, renounced all faith in revolutionary strategy.

In each case, of course, political expediency was the determining factor. Roosevelt, thinking of next year's presidential campaign, set up and knocked down a straw dummy to demonstrate that the charges of "communism" lodged against him by conservative enemies were unfounded. Stalin, at his end, in need of allies to maintain the international *status quo* of which the Soviet Union is a part, ordered the comrades and "fellow-travellers" to get along with everybody and anybody who can be induced to defend the Soviet Union, regardless of class or political affiliations.

More seeming madness crept into the situation in the following weeks. The sector of public opinion the world over under Soviet influence was working itself into passionate indignation against Italian imperialist encroachments in Africa, only to learn that the Soviet government at the same time was supplying the Italian government with wheat and oil, the very substance of war. And Stalin's representative in Geneva, Maxim Litvinov, broke his timid silence to utter a cautious protest against Italian unfairness on the Ethiopian issue only after England and France had spoken out more boldly. His careful intrusion, moreover, came as an anticlimax to less timorous protests by men and organizations previously spurned by Stalinists as "social fascist" riffraff, such as the International Federation of Trade Unions and the British Trade Union Congress.

Meantime, at the Soviet manœuvres in Kiev, the only foreign observers were General Loiseau and Colonel Medran representing France, the Chief-of-Staff of the Czech-Slovak Army, General Creichi—and General Monti of Italy.

Such cumulative "contradictions" may be inevitable. Yet they strike the surrounding world as paradox or worse. Stroke by stroke they underline the conflict of objectives between the Soviet Union as a government among governments and the Soviet Union as the supposed spearhead of the world revolution. As inevitable as the contradictions is the fact that they must always be resolved in favor of the existing State, at whatever price to the hoped-for world revolution.

It is this fundamental division of loyalty in the Soviet régime itself, its split personality as a functioning government and as a revolutionary leader, that breeds schisms and oppositions in the world communist forces. Inside Russia, dissent and doubt are quickly ironed out with "Bolshevik firmness" by the secret police. Outside the Bolshevik realm of power, less persuasive methods must suffice.

In any case, life for the orthodox believer in the Communist Party ranks, whether in Moscow or in far-off New York, is replete with mental acrobatics and violations of conscience. The fate of the Moscow believer is kindlier—at least he has no margin of free will or responsibility. His comrade under capitalism, being embarrassingly free to thumb his nose at the Kremlin, must take some of the responsibility on his own shoulders and must, moreover, explain the paradoxes to masses incapable of finessing with dialectic.

Consider the emotional and doctrinal confusion of Stalin's followers throughout the world when the Soviet government entered the League of Nations, which they had so long reviled as a gang of bandits and an imperialist conspiracy. Or consider the political torments of French communists, who for years had battled, bled, and gone to foul prisons to tear down the militarism of their native land. Suddenly, by virtue of a military alliance between Paris and Moscow, that hated militarism becomes for them a pillar of the socialist fatherland, and even those whose terms of incarceration for anti-military activity are not yet ended are under strict orders to support French

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

armaments. Even a particularly muddled editor of *The New Masses* as far away as New York feels obligated to write a "Love Letter to France," placing the *poilu* on the same pedestal with the Red soldier!

In America, the official communist movement is negligible as a force among the working masses upon whom, in theory, it rests. Its influence, restricted at best, is essentially limited to *revolté* intellectuals, yesterday's liberals, a fringe of college youth, and other maladjusted middle-class elements. But within its own narrow world the confusion is sufficiently tragic.

Petty party politicians may find it easy to force local issues into the rigid molds of Communist International *dictae,* to swallow the humiliation of overnight reversals of policy, and to boast shrilly of apocryphal "victories" in giving an accounting of their stewardship at Moscow gatherings. They may feel at home in the atmosphere of amateur Machiavellism amounting to shysterism engendered by the morally putrescent theory that the end justifies all means. These things, however, go hard with the more idealistic, principled members.

To an outsider the spurious logic that places genuine communists under the same banner with a self-appointed Harlem "God" like Father Divine is merely ludicrous. To many of the communists themselves it is a bewildering *reductio ad absurdum* of a method of thinking and a blind discipline to which they have allowed themselves to be tethered. To the atheist follower of Stalin who, at Moscow's behest, refuses contaminating contact with other communists differing on articles of the credo, it must be deeply disturbing to distribute leaflets addressed to "Catholics, Jews, Protestants, Veterans, working men and women of all creeds."

For the rank and file of the communist movement the change ordered by the recent Moscow congress is perhaps the most upsetting in their memory. The new version of the "united front" represents the sharpest about-face in communist history.

II

Ever since 1928, American communists, in conformity with policy prescribed for their movement internationally, have concentrated their efforts upon splitting existing labor and socialist organizations. It was part of a "united front from below" theory promulgated at the time, which we shall describe later. Dual groups, many of them existing chiefly on paper, were built up wherever the communists could not gain control, which is to say approximately everywhere. Every labor official was automatically referred to as a faker and misleader, including the Leftist needle trades leaders. Every radical outside the orbit of the Communist International was a "social fascist." Every observer of world affairs who dared question the policies of the Soviet rulers was asphyxiated with foul language.

The progeny of that intransigeance in the United States were dozens of organizations, most of them elaborate masks for a vacuum. These were peripheral or fringe groups under innocuous names but under stringent communist control: "innocents' clubs" some one has called them aptly.

Besides major "non-partisan" groupings like the League Against War and Fascism, there were the John Reed Clubs, Labor Research Association, International Workers Order, Film and Photo League, League of Struggle for Negro Rights, a United Council of Working Women, tenants' organizations, theatrical groups—endless associations, bureaus, leagues for every aspect of life, literature, sport, defense, and propaganda.

Each had its false front of innocent or ideologically complacent educators, liberals, ministers, socialites, novelists, feminists, racialists, editors, as the occasion demanded. But all important decisions were made by the same group of bureaucrats. If one of the false fronts stirred into a semblance of consciousness and independence, under the shock of some startling event like the wholesale executions without trial following the Kirov assassination, it was promptly reorganized into quiescence and the restive souls buried under vituperation.

The elaborate structure of this make-believe movement naturally turned to *opéra bouffe*. Multiple names for the same clique may have given the masqueraders a puerile thrill of self-importance. They may have yielded enough resolutions and other raw material for impressive reports to headquarters. The one thing they failed most conspicuously to do was to advance the revolution for which they presumably were organized. Despite mass unemployment and the stirring of a new social consciousness, the movement failed to grow beyond its picayune proportions and failed to establish contact with the mass of organized, conscious revolutionary sentiment.

These fringe organizations multiplied their insignificance by forming a "united front" among themselves and with the Communist Party which ran them. The only way an organized worker could become part of this front was to desert his own organization and join the appropriate duplicate in the dual line-up. More genuine united front organizations carried over from the less dictated years before 1928—like the International Labor Defense or the Friends of the Soviet Union—were "cleansed" of any one who questioned the Kremlin's infallibility and reduced to the regulation level of impotence of a peripheral unit.

The International Labor Defense, known to the general public through its participation in the Sacco-Vanzetti defense, various I. W. W. cases, the Mooney case, and more recently the Scottsboro agitation, is a fair example of the process. It originated in Moscow and its leadership has always been communist. In its first years, however, there was none of the rigid dictatorial control that was instituted in 1928–29. In many American cities, in the initial stage, non-communists were in charge. In championing labor cases there was no discrimination against prisoners whose views were unacceptable to Moscow. Even the communist heads were under no absolute necessity of surrendering their consciences and their common sense in the interests of the "monolith."

But in the new period all this was changed. Those who balked in the Moscow harness were expelled and the organization placed in "disciplined" hands. Local branches that slipped the moorings of 100 per cent communist control were promptly deprived of their charters. Until then the co-operation of a socialist leader in some International Labor Defense case would have been announced as: "Noted socialist joins the defense." Under the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

new régime of *Schrecklichkeit* the announcement was more likely to be: "The treacherous social fascist X . . ., to cover up his filthy treachery, pretends to join the defense." That was the new mock-revolutionary spirit.

Worse than that, it became the settled procedure to discriminate against non-communists and especially against communists who strayed ever so slightly from the true faith. A recent and flagrant instance of its attitude was the refusal of the defense organization to bail out organizers of the Agricultural and Cannery Workers Union indicted under the California Criminal Syndicalism Law because they disagreed on union policies with the Communist Party bureaucrat in charge of the Western district. No less indicative was its failure to help a communist leader of the Gastonia strike who had fled to Russia and had not found that country to his taste. When he was back in a North Carolina prison, the International Labor Defense which had once championed him found him unworthy of further assistance.

Except for the fact that it is more successful than the others, the American League Against War and Fascism is typical of the made-in-Moscow fringe organizations. This is a statement of fact, not of reproach. When the order for its organization was brought by a Comrade Yurevich in 1932, the titular head of the American communists, Earl Browder, was opposed to the scheme. He argued the futility of pacifism in the face of a capitalistic war danger. But peremptory orders came from the Kremlin confirming Yurevich's proposal. A meeting of "dependable" intellectuals was called. The emissary spoke in German. *"Es ist eine Telegramme gekommen aus Moskau,"* he began. Then he laid down the line for drawing in "religious pacifists, true liberals and trade-union members who were above party lines"—that is to say, those who were not socialists or anti-Stalin communists. An American Committee Against War was the response to the Moscow telegram, and subsequently it evolved into the present league.

Beginning with names like Roger Baldwin and Upton Sinclair, it enrolled pacifists, eminent liberals, free-thinking ministers and rabbis—everybody who didn't like war and Nazis. Organized labor and non-communist revolutionary groups were prominent chiefly by their absence. As in all organizations with imposing letterheads, the initiators and small steering group run it to their own taste, and they are communists. Although most of the people composing it might object to militarist measures even under a revolutionary label, any word or act by the league questioning the wisdom of a Kremlin policy is unthinkable. Were any of its members to object, for instance, to a Moscow maneuver which, in his view, aided the fascist elements, he would find himself quickly "liquidated" as far as activity in this league is concerned.

A true united front calls for equality among its component parts, unimpeded collaboration in reaching common decisions. When approximately 100 per cent of the control rests with one of these organizations, which fixes all vital policies without the knowledge or consent of the others, the front is no longer united—it's just tied together by misrepresentation and gullibility. Such were the self-styled united front movements of this period, however praiseworthy their ostensible objectives may have been.

Proof of the "success" of the united front from below could be seen in the heart of Manhattan, between Union Square and Madison Square, last May Day. Marshalled in ten divisions, more than a hundred organizations and groups were in line for the communist united front parade. Virtually all, with the notable exception of Father Divine and his cohorts of religious maniacs, were spawn of this precocious period so prolific in spurious "mass" organizations.

Parallel with the line of march of this supposed united front parade, was another which included the vast clothing workers unions, a great many other bona fide labor organizations, the Socialist Party locals, anti-Stalin communist organizations, Workmen's Circle branches, the League for Industrial Democracy—in fact, the labor and revolutionary movement of New York minus official communism and its satellites.

These rival fronts were a gigantic demonstration of the lack of unity achieved by communist methods from 1928 to 1935. The record of failure in the United States was no more than a tiny segment of the larger world-wide record, with the tragedy in Germany as its blackest mark.

Now, because this failure debilitated the labor forces of the world and helped fascist elements to gain the upper hand, a complete reversal is ordered. Another sharp "zigzag" has been made, one that outwardly seems to contradict everything that went before, but essentially is consistent in that it continues the basic motive of saving the Soviet State at whatever price in the currency of principles. The Seventh Congress in Moscow put the official seal on the new turn, although it had been in progress ever since the staggering blow of Hitler's triumph.

The American party, like other national sectors, must now placate the "fakers," "misleaders," and "social fascists." But what are they to do when these refuse to be reconciled? What are they to do with the dual organizations created in the preceding period? How are they to undo the havoc wrought in years of narrow, destructive sectarianism?

Their problem is immeasurably complicated by the need to defend indiscriminately all past and present actions of the Soviet State. Somehow the concept of pacifism must be stretched to permit maximum arming not only of Russia, but of its potential allies against Germany, namely France, the Little Entente and perhaps Italy. The rapprochement with social-democrats and bourgeois democrats against the common fascist foe must be achieved somehow across the hurdle of Moscow's refusal to free Mensheviks, not to mention non-conformist Bolsheviks, rotting in its own prisons.

Parochial as these problems may appear on this side of the Atlantic, they are the very stuff of history in Europe. In Germany they were decisive factors in the historic tussle between labor-democratic forces and Nazi medievalism. In France—where a Popular Front embracing all anti-Fascist groups, from the communists to the avowedly pro-capitalist Radical-Socialist Party is now functioning—they are today crucial in shaping the future of that country and perhaps of the continent.

III

The classical example of a successful united front movement was the one

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

carried out by Lenin, Trotsky, and their associates in the turbulent days of 1917.

When General Kornilov threatened to march upon Petrograd, in August 1917, the Soviet of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers Deputies, led by moderate Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, forced Kerensky to outlaw him. They recognized that Kornilov's plans for a military dictatorship meant a régime which has since come to be called fascist. The Bolshevik leaders at the time were in prison or in hiding, officially proscribed by the Kerensky régime. Nevertheless they entered into this united anti-Kornilov front.

To many rank-and-file Bolsheviks it seemed a treacherous compromise. Trotsky has recorded how a delegation of Red sailors called upon him in Kresty prison to demand an explanation. Results, however, proved the wisdom of this tactic from the Bolshevik point of view. Kornilov's troops were defeated, Kerensky's Provisional Government declared Russia officially a republic, the Bolsheviks gained rapidly in prestige and support among the masses. The anti-Kornilov front having crystallized public opinion toward the Left, the road to Bolshevik power was considerably cleared.

At no time during this united front maneuver did the Bolsheviks temporize as to program, principles, or the integrity of their organization. They fused with no political party, maintaining their identity throughout. Their opposition to Kornilov was no ruse—it was a matter of life and death to their own movement and to all concerned.

The classic example of a united front movement that failed tragically of its communist purpose is provided by events in China during 1924–27. In those years the Communist Party leaned so far backward that it laid its neck trustingly on Chiang Kai-Shek's execution block. In retrospect it is clear that this disastrous bias to the Right was an act of despair and disillusionment after the bankruptcy of eager expectations for a world revolution. Communist uprisings in Latvia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Germany had been bloodily suppressed. Moscow was in a state of mind remarkably like today's, frantically seeking alliances in the most unseemly places.

In China, the alliance was made with the Kuo-Min-Tang. The redoubtable Michael Borodin and General Galen-Bluecher were assigned by Moscow as political and military advisors respectively. The outstanding Kuo-Min-Tang militarist, General Chiang Kai-Shek, was hailed in Moscow as savior of the Chinese masses.

Protected on the Left by Moscow, which enabled him to hold the restive industrial workers and the revolutionary intellectuals in leash, and assisted by Soviet brains and resources, Chiang Kai-Shek made his dramatic attack on British imperialism and brought province after province under Kuo-Min-Tang domination. The moment he felt a measure of security, however, he shook off the communists by provoking and suppressing an uprising in Shanghai in 1927 and by a series of blood purges in other key cities. He remained as fascist dictator and relentless enemy of the communists.

This debacle was the most disastrous single failure of 1923–27, the so-called "Second Period" of the united front strategy. It was a period of opportunist communist blocs and fusions with political elements of the most diverse types—with the peasant party headed by Raditch in the Balkans, with conservative trade-unionists in the Anglo-Russian Committee, with the La Follette coalition in the American presidential elections of 1924. The communists bargained with any one who was amenable.

They failed not only in China but everywhere. It was partly in a frenzied attempt to cover up the failure and to "liquidate" dissatisfaction in the ranks, that the leadership under Stalin intensified the struggle against dissident factions. The relative democracy inside the party was snuffed out and the theory of a "monolithic" organization under infallible dictation from above was proclaimed and enforced.

The so-called "Third Period," a violent reaction against the costly horse-trading of the preceding years, was launched. All the failures of the previous period were blamed on "Right deviators" like Bukharin in Russia, Brandler in Germany, Lovestone in the United States. These were dropped overboard and designated as the "chief danger" to the communist movement.

The new era was conceived officially at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928 and delivered by a plenum of its Executive Committee in the spring of 1929. Acting on a logic all too familiar in history, the defeated but purged International announced impending victory. It declared that the collapse of capitalism was once more the order of the day, that a "revolutionary upsurge" was manifest everywhere, and that reformists—especially social-democrats and trade-unionists—were more insidious enemies even than the fascists. From that time forward any one in the labor and revolutionary camps who differed from the Third International's prescribed views by a scintilla was *ipso facto* a "social fascist" who must be fought to the death.

Nevertheless, a united front of some sort was needed. Lenin himself had repeatedly and emphatically stated that without the united front the working class cannot fulfill its historic mission of dislodging capitalism. The problem was with whom to unite.

The solution was ingenious. It was decided to unite with the victims and opponents of the capitalist system—not those under the thumb of "social fascists" but the unorganized, amorphous mass, and as many as could be detached from the "social fascist" organizations. By the grace of dialectic reasoning it was made manifest that precisely because these masses were spiritless and unintelligent they would be clay in the potter's hand of an organized minority. This organized minority of communists, suckled at the very breast of Machiavellism, would lure the masses into innocuous-looking organizations under communist control, each model conceived in the spittin' image of its maker.

Throughout the world, therefore, there sprung to life the most characteristic expression of the Third Period: those peripheral organizations and "innocents' clubs" which we have already seen in America. By tens and by scores they came into being, for various objectives, with liberal, pacifist or even religious window dressing, ostensibly independent but in fact taking orders from the same center. This was the heyday of dual unions, paper "movements," and splitting of labor as a high communist duty.

This was the "united front from below." Hurdling over organized labor

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and radical groups, it proceeded to build its own organizations, drawing on the swelling army of unemployed, particularly unemployed intellectuals, whatever workers could be won away from existing organizations, frightened liberals seeking "revolution insurance," and other heterogeneous elements.

IV

The present swing back to methods reminiscent of the Second Period is as sudden and far-reaching as was its overthrow in 1928–29. Again the violence of the somersault is a reaction to dismal failure, as demonstrated with such brutal forcefulness by the events in Germany leading to the accession of Adolf Hitler. The record is of such recent date that intelligent newspaper readers require little prodding to recall how communists finished what the social-democrats left undone in the matter of splitting the ranks of German labor and anti-fascist groups in the face of the rapidly swelling Nazi menace.

Under the political conditions then current in Germany their stiff-necked sectarianism and narrow party politics prepared Germany for the Nazi blow against civilization. The opportunity to scatter the Nazi rabble before it fortified itself with state power was within reach of the communists, the social-democrats, the organized labor movement. The failure to organize a genuine united front in time—for which the Third Period policies of the Communist International must take a large share of the blame—left all these elements impotent to cope with the forces of mediæval reaction.

In the elections of September, 1930, the Nazi representation in the Reichstag jumped from 12 to 108. Surely that was signal enough for a truce in the ranks of the anti-Nazi groups. Yet, in the anti-Versailles plebiscite of August, 1931, the communists joined with the Nazis against the socialist government of Prussia. In the presidential elections of 1932 social-democrats supported Hindenburg against the communist Thaelmann—and on the following January the same Hindenburg turned over the reins of government to Hitler! Bitterness, recrimination, purblind orthodoxy sharpened the knife that slit the throat of Germany.

After the evil was irrevocably accomplished, Moscow began the panicky retreat from the tactics that had helped to splinter Left forces. Its promised "revolutionary upsurge" had resolved into triumphant fascism in the country where the communists were strongest, Germany, and a fascist upsurge elsewhere in the world. Faced by its most formidable war threat in the figure of Hitler, the Soviet government consummated compromises far more unpalatable to its revolutionary friends abroad than any that it had been called upon to make before.

The peripheral communist organizations in all countries will now make pathetic efforts to return into the fold of the movements which they have disrupted and villified. Once more they are attempting to regain the co-operation of people and organizations whom they expelled and alienated. Only the anti-Stalin communists are now excluded from their anxious affections.

In the United States, the indications are that all but a few of the fringe organizations will be "liquidated" or control handed over to a non-communist majority. All the forces and resources of the Communist Party are likely to be concentrated in the League Against War and Fascism and this organization made more flexible and more honestly responsive to its membership. The communists will show themselves not only willing but eager to sink their individuality into some sort of labor party oriented just Left enough to include defense of the Soviet Union. Here, as in the rest of the world, every larger revolutionary principle and objective will be forgotten in the interests of the Soviet State.

"We do not abandon the Marseillaise, song of the soldiers of the Convention," the French Communist leader Thorez recently exclaimed. "We do not abandon to the enemy the Tricolor flag of the Revolution." In America this attitude expresses itself in a belated respect for the American Revolution, and communists suddenly vie with the Liberty League in staunch defense of the democratic traditions of 1776.

In the recent municipal elections in San Francisco, as a trial balloon for what the communists call macaronically a "mass-class labor party," they supported a United Labor ticket with Redfren Mason, former music critic for a Hearst paper, as candidate for Mayor, a couple of Sailors' Union candidates under communist influence for sheriff and municipal judge, Anita Whitney of the Communist Party and Evan Wattles of the Democratic City Council as candidates for supervisor, a Utopian Society member for District Attorney, and an assortment of other liberals and radicals. Such a political stew indicates the new catholicity of the communist movement.

To radicals unfamiliar with the history of the Third International's zigzags in its united front policy, or to wishful thinkers with accommodating memories, the new alignments, whether in Paris or San Francisco, seem pregnant with portent. But leaders of organized labor, socialists, and others who have at various times tried united fronts with official communists are suspicious at best and hostile in general. The fact that Moscow's proposed united front, while accepting out-and-out capitalist elements, rigidly excludes communists of other than the Stalinist denomination scarcely mitigates that distrust.

The offer of friendship in this country has been rejected by organized labor and the socialist movement. The Right-wing socialists are definitely opposed to any contact with those who called them social fascists and agents of the capitalists, and the Left-wing socialists are also suspicious. The Machiavellism of the years since 1928 cannot be lived down so easily—the aura of shysterism and unprincipled plotting remains despite the new disposition. The sudden enthusiasm for the traditions of 1776 does not jibe with recent jubilant approval of dictatorial excesses in the land of Soviets—the recurrent contradiction of a worldwide revolutionary movement serving as the helpless appendage of a government.

The plight of the American communists is therefore a highly unpleasant one. When the next May Day comes around they will be unable (unless new directives arrive before then) to stage a rival parade of puppet organizations. Yet they will be excluded from the main show. The only way they will be able to promote the desired united front, indeed, will be to absent themselves altogether as an organization and thus maintain the appearance of labor unity.

The parade in itself, of course, is un-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

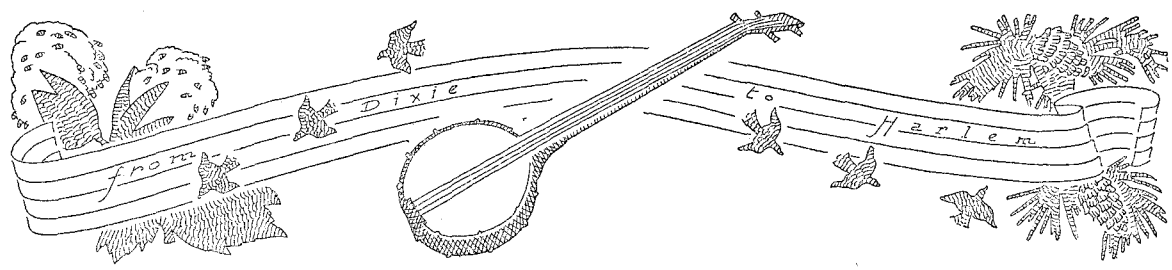
important. It merely symbolizes the hopeless position into which rigid sectarianism and blind obedience to an unlimited dictatorship from above have led official communism. For the Bolsheviks the need for a genuine united front is as urgent today as it was in the crisis of the Kornilov menace in 1917. But in the intervening years they have forfeited, in the eyes of non-Bolshevik labor, faith in their sense of fair play or essential dependability.

Their renewed proffer of a real united front may be an honest tactic. The seriousness of the fascist threat makes this altogether likely. But those to whom the proffer is made may be forgiven for wondering whether that tactic is not another trick. With more than a decade of communist sectarian politics spread out before their eyes, with its boastful theory that the end hallows even the foulest means, still the Communist International's basic ethics, this wonderment is understandable. The first to understand it should be the Kremlin, which trusts nobody, pardons nobody, and is more ruthless in its hatred of communist dissenters than of capitalists.

Moscow's new united front thus begins, in the United States, in a stalemate. That stalemate may not continue forever. There is at least a possibility that the present hostility of socialists and more Leftist trade-unions will evaporate. It has evaporated in some key sectors of Europe. Underground communists and socialists are co-operating in Austria and Germany. In France the united front has led to frank talk of "organic unity," which is to say fusion in one party far removed from communism of the Leninist brand. In Czecho-Slovakia socialists and communists are at one in supporting the bourgeois army of their country.

The "Right-wingers" of the revolutionary movements in America, under these circumstances, may conceivably sink past differences with the communists. The possibility is not excluded. They would exact, of course, unimpeded right of way for their trade-union policies, their reformist tactics, their possible labor party hopes. And, from all proofs offered demonstratively by the Moscow congress of the Third International, the communists are primed to agree to these conditions.

Russia's immediate need is for pressure groups in every country to help create a friendly disposition toward the Soviet government in preparation for possible war. Any coalition pledged to defend the Soviet Union against outside attack is therefore likely to receive unconditional communist acceptance. The idyllic vision of moderate socialists like Leon Blum, Otto Bauer and, let us say, Algernon Lee as recruiting sergeants for Russia and its capitalist allies conveys the hope implicit in Moscow's new united front.



Dixie, Harlem, and Tin Pan Alley

Who Writes Negro Music — And How?

By Sigmund Spaeth

How far-reaching is the Negro influence on American music? How much of the so-called Negro music, past and present, has been composed by actual Negroes? And which is better in the long run, the all-wool-top, solid black article or its paleface imitation?

These questions arise with the increasing interest in the authentic Negro materials of American music, as well as the undeniable popularity of highly sophisticated, modern versions of an essentially naïve and primitive type of racial expression. Any honest attempt to answer them almost inevitably results in a mass of contradictory discoveries and paradoxical conclusions.

Like most other people, the American Negro has two kinds of music, which may be called roughly the happy and the sad. Both kinds are included among the spirituals (why do so many white people insist on calling them "spirituelles"?) and both kinds also have their secular forms. The "blues," as their title implies, are basically sad music, although they frequently reach a species of exaltation that conveys an atmosphere of actual joy. Work songs and slave songs in general are mostly happy, perhaps because the lively rhythms had a practical utility in making manual labor easier and more pleasant. In such dance forms as the "stomp," the cake-walk, or the various taps, clogs, and breakdowns, the music almost necessarily has a cheerful connotation, although there is such a thing as a slow drag, danced in melancholy mood.

Today Harlem has taken all these traditional types of Negro music and turned them into a self-conscious, artifi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cial product, which nevertheless gains favor with all kinds of hearers, and much of which is written by white men, particularly those talented and acquisitive Jewish boys of Tin Pan Alley who can imitate any kind of popular song, and often improve on the original.

It is fair to say that the stream of Negro music in America starts and finishes with white men, some of whom have completely misinterpreted the folk-materials at their disposal, but there has always been present a genuine background of Negro inspiration, literally coloring everything that flowed from it, even when its real nature was misunderstood. White men wrote supposedly "colored" music long before the spirituals or the real plantation songs were discovered, and even Stephen Foster, according to the Negro's intuitive reaction, wrote white man's music, melodically important, but conventional in style.

What the modern Negro hates most of all is to be patronized, to be regarded with indulgent amusement as a naïvely childlike character, whose chief mission in life is to dance and sing, with the intervals filled by dirty work that nobody else cares to do. He would rather be called a "nigger" than a "darkey," with its implication of condescension, and he secretly loathes such a song as *That's Why Darkies Were Born,* even though he may sing it in public and be quite unaware that its tune is a combination of the Welsh Protheroe's *Shadow March* and the Russian Tschaikowsky's march theme in his *Pathetic Symphony.*

He carries this aversion to extremes in the upper strata of Harlem society, where one boasts of inability to talk Negro dialect and carries out the Caucasian manner of life in every detail. The colored intelligentsia of New York are perhaps more condescending toward the primitive music of their own race than any civilized white man could be toward folk-music in general, and their talented musicians, of which there are many, aim at the elegant conventions of the concert stage and grand opera rather than the direct expression of unique racial instincts.

Meanwhile the popular song-writers of Harlem, white or black, gaily exploit Negro rhythms, harmonies, and instrumentations, glorifying particularly the complete absence of inhibitions so widely and carelessly credited to the colored race, but giving all their output a veneer of modern urbanity that is almost as artificial as the elegance of the intelligentsia themselves. One has only to look up a few of the Harlem hits to become aware of the difference in spirit and wording between any traditional Negro song (or its successful imitation) and the musical output of the *Nouveau Noir.*

A typical example is that jazzy favorite, *Underneath the Harlem Moon,* and although it was written by the white team of Gordon and Revel, now devoting themselves mostly to pictures, it expresses completely the spirit of the Northern Negro in the big town. The nostalgic tendencies of the *Dixie* type are derided in such lines as "The South is in your own back yard," "Pickin' cotton is taboo" and "Their cabin is a penthouse up on Lenox Avenue." There is a hint of concession to the old happy-go-lucky style in " 'Tain't no sin to laugh and grin, That's why darkies were born," but even this direct quotation carries no suggestion of the hard work laid out by Lew Brown and Ray Henderson in their treatment of the same idea, with its calm admonition to "accept your destiny." Another implied quotation is in the line "You may call it madness, but they call it hi-de-ho," which puts the final stamp of modernism on the moon that Harlem claims for its own.

Way up North in Southland also mentions "darkies," and states that "Lenox Avenue is now the Mason-Dixon line," while the Swanee Shore is represented by the Harlem River. There is a reference to "High-brown Hi-Di-Hies" and a further slap at tradition in the jingling "Old Black Joe's a gigolo."

Another modern song called *Harlem Hospitality* insists that "Hi-de-ho will keep the doctor far away" (it used to be merely apples), and dismisses Dixie contemptuously by glorifying "the one and only Lenox Avenue" as "the one and only place to travel to."

Irving Berlin's *Harlem on My Mind,* which Ethel Waters sang rather perfunctorily in *As Thousands Cheer,* portrayed a Parisian Negress of the Josephine Baker type, regretting her absence from New York's colored quarter. "My 'parlez-vous' will not ring true," she says, and "My lips begin to whisper 'Mon Cheri,' but my heart keeps singing 'hi-de-ho.' "

Cab Calloway is generally credited with inventing the whole school of "scat-singing" associated with those aspirated nonsense syllables, but actually the practice goes back directly to a famous opium song called *Willie the Weeper,* ancestor of *Minnie the Moocher, Winnie the Wailer* and *Kickin' the Gong Around.* The practice of singing a refrain of silly syllables is even older, appearing in the English madrigals and folk-music of all kinds, but *Willie the Weeper* had the definite "scat" technic that is now the coloratura cadenza of all Harlem.

Calloway himself is an arranger and interpreter rather than a composer, but he represents the new youth in Negro music, with unlimited physical energy and a sophistication that stops at nothing. His *Lady with the Fan,* obviously inspired by the ostrich-feather revelations of the Century of Progress, "hypnotized ol' man Rasputin" and "could vamp Mahatma Ghandi." She even "awakened Rip Van Winkle."

But Calloway has secured some of his best results from tunes composed by Harold Arlen, a white man who has such an instinctive command of Negro effects that he has been selected again and again to create the Cotton Club Reviews, always producing one or more hits in the process. He gave Cab Calloway *Kickin' the Gong Around,* as well as *Minnie the Moocher's Weddin' Day,* whose words, by Ted Koehler, refer directly to Willie the Weeper and other familiar figures of the hop-joints.

Arlen wrote *You Gave Me Everything but Love,* as a sequel to the popular *I Can't Give You Anything but Love,* which Dorothy Fields (Lew's daughter) and Jimmy McHugh wrote for Lew Leslie's *Blackbirds.* His *Harlem Holiday* mentions "planes in the air" and promises that "gin will be free" and "you'll be high on old Lenox Avenue." Similar in spirit is his Harlem *Breakfast Ball,* which is ushered in by "a Hi-de-hi and a trumpet call." The orgiastic "rent parties" of the black belt are suggested by Arlen's *Raisin' the Rent.* But of course his masterpiece is *Stormy Weather,* the last word in modern Negro music and one of the most original of popular tunes. Its suc-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cessor, *Ill Wind* (*You're blowin' me no good*) falls below this peak, in spite of its literary implications.

The real colored genius of Harlem at the moment is Edward Kennedy Ellington, familiarly known as "Duke." He stands at the top as both composer and interpreter and has been called "Harlem's Aristocrat of Jazz." Leopold Stokowski, Percy Grainger, and other outstanding musicians have paid their respects to him, and every exponent of modern popular music has learned something from his performances and his records.

Ellington's *Black and Tan Fantasy* is a masterpiece of its kind and such pieces as *Mood Indigo, Black Beauty, East St. Louis Boodle-oo, Just Let Me Off at Harlem,* and *The Mooche* deserve at least double stars. He can write white man's music also, as in his melodic hit, *Solitude*. His *Sophisticated Lady* is clever and original, with equal appeal to the black and the white.

Duke Ellington and Cab Calloway set the pace for up-to-date jazz artists of the neo-African type, but there are other black musicians of highly individual talent and considerable reputation among the whites as well as among their own people. Jimmie Johnson is as modernistic as any of them in his creative work, and a spectacular pianist besides. *Scalin' the Blues* and *The Carolina Shout* are among his successful pieces, and his *Yamecraw* made the critics and serious musicians take notice.

Johnson often plays the piano for W. C. Handy, the "father of the Blues," a soft-spoken, light-skinned intellectual, who takes Negro music seriously and has done his full share in keeping it before the public. His most famous tune, the *Saint Louis Blues,* partly founded on a traditional melody, shows the tango rhythm in its chorus, and Handy explains this apparent paradox by pointing out that the drum-beat pattern known as "tangana" was originally a jungle dance. It came to Spain by way of the Moors, developing into the Cuban Habanera and the polite Argentine forms, and eventually reaching America, where its African origin makes it a natural medium for Negro composers.

Handy has published a whole *Book of the Blues,* mostly legitimate folk material, containing also his own adaptations and compositions. A scholarly introduction by E. Abbé Niles points out the true form of the traditional Blues, two lines expressing the same thought, perhaps with identical words, followed by a third which comments upon it or gives it a new twist. The flatted seventh seems to be the typical interval of blue harmony.

Handy's own Blues, such as the *Saint Louis, Memphis, Beale Street,* etc., follow the traditional form, with necessary elaborations, but this is seldom true of white men's imitations. The *Wabash Blues,* for instance, which Sadie Thompson played on a phonograph record all through *Rain,* are not strictly Blues at all, particularly when they introduce a patter from *The Banks of the Wabash*. Still further from the tradition is the English *Limehouse Blues,* although both of these are excellent tunes.

George Gershwin knows how to write Blues, and Jerome Kern learned the trick after several unsuccessful experiments. (His *Can't Help Lovin' that Man,* in *Show Boat,* has the authentic touch.) Both of these composers, as well as Irving Berlin to a certain extent, have assimilated Negro elements until they are able to imitate almost anything that is characteristic of the black man's music. The climax of such imitation is unquestionably Gershwin's operatic version of *Porgy,* already recognized as America's most important contribution to modern music. Here a white man, saturated with the atmosphere of Charleston's island jungles and Catfish Row, has produced authentic Negro spirituals, blues, and jazz, but with the stamp of his own extraordinary individuality.

One of the most famous colored composers is J. Rosamond Johnson, brother of the poet, James Weldon Johnson, and editor with him of two important volumes of spirituals. "Rosey" is still best known by his work with the old team of Cole and Johnson, which produced *Under the Bamboo Tree, My Castle on the River Nile,* and other hits. He admits that the spiritual, *Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen,* influenced the tune of the *Bamboo Tree,* but of the two songs the *Castle on the River Nile* seems to have a stronger Negro quality. Rosamond Johnson's latest hit, *Just an Old Banjo* (*without any strings*) is distinctly white music of the nostalgic type.

Reginald Foresythe, a Negro composer who has made his chief reputation in London, returned to New York not long ago under the sponsorship of Paul Whiteman, and is now publishing and recording sophisticated pieces with such trick titles as *Serenade for a Wealthy Widow,* showing the influence of the French Satie and the English Lord Berners. His earlier work included *Mississippi Basin,* for which the lyric was supplied by Andy Razaf, a West Indian who has specialized in the words of such double-meaning classics as *My Handy Man, My Military Man* and the *Electrician Blues.* (He collaborated with another excellent Negro musician, Eubie Blake, in a sequel called *My Handy Man Ain't Handy No More,* and with "Fats" Waller in a perfectly good imitation of the real spirituals, *When Gabriel Blows His Horn.*)

The League of Composers, which goes in for modernism in a big way, has paid special attention to the colored William Grant Still, who does the orchestrations for Willard Robison, another white man with an almost religious attitude toward Negro music and a thorough appreciation of its possibilities. Thus far this lighter work by Still seems more significant than his cacophonous attempts at originality.

Of the older generation there is Will Marion Cook, whose *Swing Along* became popular in spite of its civilized conventions, and who composed *Bon Bon Buddy, the Chocolate Drop* for Bert Williams, thereby earning the eternal gratitude of thousands of white folks. He also wrote a fine Negro *Exhortation,* which foretold the imitations of Jacques Wolfe, like the Tibbettized *Glory Road,* mostly to words by Clement Wood, also white (and exceedingly free). Incidentally, Mr. Wolfe should not claim the composition of such folk-tunes as *Shortnin' Bread,* which he has merely arranged.

Henry C. Burleigh, organist and baritone, is perhaps the most intellectual of Negro musicians, and his arrangements of the spirituals have been criticized as over-refined and too elegantly precious in their harmonies. The English Negro composer, Coleridge-Taylor, departed even further from the traditions of his race, writing

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

perfectly correct and respectable Victorian music, without a suggestion of African background.

R. Nathaniel Dett, formerly at Hampton Institute, is far closer to his colored companions, and has arranged spirituals beautifully, besides contributing to instrumental music such popular pieces as his *Juba Dance*. Hall Johnson, primarily a choral conductor, has also secured fascinating effects with both the sacred and the secular music of the Negroes, using a rococo style of arrangement that makes the voices practically instrumental. In the same class belongs Eva Jessye, who directed the singers in *Four Saints in Three Acts* (and also in *Porgy and Bess*) and has created unusual combinations of song and dance in her work with various groups of Negroes.

The present generation has perhaps forgotten Jim Europe, who introduced Negro jazz to the continent of his own name, went through the World War as a bandmaster, and was stabbed to death by a drummer in his own orchestra. He composed much of the music for Irene and Vernon Castle, including the famous *Castle Walk* and the *Esmeralda Waltz*. But he directed a concert at Carnegie Hall which defeated its own purpose by the pretentiousness and racial insignificance of its program.

Of the modern colored conductors Fletcher Henderson deserves mention, as does Locris Armstrong, who is also a trumpeter and composer. Spencer Williams is worth remembering for his *Tishimingo Blues, I Ain't Got Nobody,* and *Moan, You Moaners,* which has the real feeling of a spiritual. There was also the team of Creamer and Layton, which created *After You've Gone,* and has now developed into a London success as Layton and Johnson. Sissle and Blake are another famous pair of composers and performers, paralleled by Miller and Lyles, with such shows as *Shuffle Along* and the *Chocolate Dandies*.

Going back still further, it appears that a Negro, Scott Joplin, wrote the *Maple Leaf Rag,* which created a distinct piano technic, represented today by Waller, Hughie Woolford, Arthur Tatum, and others, while Macro Pinkard is recognized for *Here Comes the Showboat* and *Sugar,* and Chris Smith for *Ballin' the Jack*.

Gussie Davis, a Negro composer of the nineties, wrote such sentimental ballads as *The Baggage Coach Ahead* and *The Fatal Wedding,* but long before his time another Negro, James Bland, had revealed the true spirit of the plantation in his immortal *Carry Me Back to Old Virginny, In the Evening by the Moonlight,* and *Oh, Dem Golden Slippers*.

The best Negro music at the close of the past century was actually written by a white man, Harry von Tilzer, who turned out such hits as *Down Where the Cotton Blossoms Grow* (*Picture To-night*), *Alexander* (long before the addition of Berlin's *Rag-time Band*), *Good-bye, Eliza Jane, What You Goin' to Do When the Rent Comes 'Round?* (*Rufus Rastus Johnson Brown*) and the *Cubanola Glide,* which started the rage for dance songs, leading eventually to the fox-trot, Charleston, and Black Bottom.

The German Theodore Metz also struck a genuinely colored note in his *Hot Time in the Old Town To-night,* while *Ta-ra-ra-boom deay* (or *de-ré,* to be fancy), an authentic black ribaldry, was picked up by Henry Sayers in Babe Connors's St. Louis resort. They were called "coon songs" in those days: *Coon, Coon, Coon, I Wish Mah Color Would Fade, If the Man in the Moon Were a Coon, Every Race Has a Flag but the Coon,* but the word has become practically obsolete, and it never seems to have offended the Negro like either "nigger" or "darkey." (The Southerners strike a nice medium by pronouncing "Negro" as "Nigruh." Colored people in general prefer to think of Negro as capitalized, and they resent the feminine "Negress," because they associate it with tigress or lioness rather than empress, princess, or governess.)

With so many Negro composers always at work, and so much of the true folk-music available, it is a wonder that white men have accomplished what they have, with similar materials. Foster, Dan Emmett, and others set a high standard in writing for the early minstrel shows (although they frankly sentimentalized the Negro) and today we have Hoagy Carmichael turning out the *Washboard Blues* (best of the white imitations) and the still popular *Lazy Bones,* with Arthur Schwartz and Howard Dietz contributing *Louisiana Hayride,* and one of the greatest of them all, *Chloe,* by Neil Moret and Gus Kahn, not so far in the past.

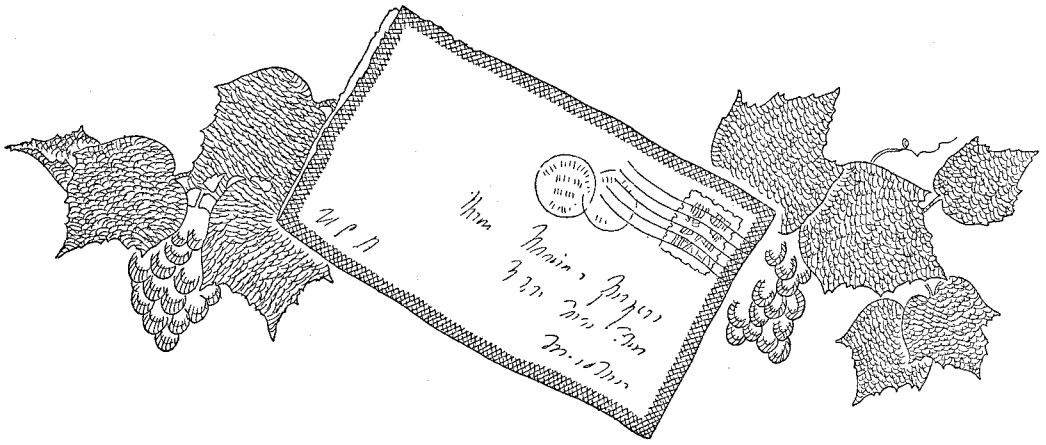
White men can point with pride also to such convincing interpretations of the Negro spirit as Geibel's *Kentucky Babe,* the *Georgia Camp Meeting* of Kerry Mills, Shelton Brooks's *Darktown Strutters' Ball,* and *Some of These Days,* Kern's *Old Man River,* and *Lawd, You Made the Night Too Long,* by Victor Young and Sam Lewis (even though it rhymes "Hallelujah" with "to Ya," religiously capitalizing the abbreviated pronoun).

There is a real Negro atmosphere in Myddleton's *Down South,* still a universal favorite, Lily Strickland's *Lindy Lou,* and those close relatives, *Lindy, Mah Lady Lou,* and *Lou, Lou, I Love You,* Chattaway's *Mandy Lee,* and Barney Fagan's *My Gal Is a High-born Lady*. The Bohemian Dvořák showed what could be done with Negro materials in symphonic and chamber music; Debussy's *Golliwogg's Cakewalk* is grand syncopation, and there are touches of inspiration in Samual Gardiner's *From the Canebrake* and Albert Spalding's *Alabama*.

So the whole question of Negro music arrives eventually at a deadlock. Perhaps it may be argued that a first-class white composer of the serious or popular type can always adapt himself successfully to the Negro style, but that a top-notch colored musician is still the best exponent of his own racial characteristics. Between the two artistic extremes there is material for much more than this brief summary, particularly if one digs up, by way of contrast, some of the atrocious attempts of our early songsters to write Negro dialect, such as "Me want no joys, no ills me fear, But on my Bonja play." But that is another story.

There is another story, too, in the various interpreters of Negro music, particularly the singers, both black and white. What really matters is that Negro characteristics of rhythm, melody, and harmony have become deeply imbedded in American music of all kinds, and that these characteristics preserve their individuality in spite of repeated applications of sophisticated veneer, artificial sentimentality, insincerity, and downright ignorance. Any racial art that can stand such treatment must have a strong constitution and unlimited vitality.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The Return to the Source

A STORY

By Jo Pagano

WHEN the letter came telling of my grandfather's death my father was downtown, at work, at the market. I was the first to see the letter. It stuck up out of the mailbox, an oblong, somewhat crumpled envelope with a black border, postmarked from Italy and inscribed with a painful, cramped, old-fashioned handwriting. I took it upstairs, into the living-room, where my mother was cleaning house.

"There's a letter here for the old man," I said, concealing it against my side. She looked at me expectantly out of her old eyes, waiting for me to hand it to her. She had a dust-towel wrapped around her head, and she was holding a rag in one hand. "It's from Italy," I said. "I'm afraid it's bad news."

"What is it?" she asked, looking at me fearsomely. I held it out.

"Oh, come voglio fà!" she moaned in terror, dropping the rag. She would not take the letter. She looked at the black border with dread-filled eyes.

"You'd better open it," I suggested, gently, painfully aware of the horror that any indication of death arouses in the aging.

She looked at me dumbly, then took the letter from my hand with repugnance. "It must be his father," she muttered. She sank down in the nearest chair and held the letter this way and that, looking at the writing, fearing to open it: "What shall we do?" she asked me in Italian.

"You'd better open it," I suggested again.

But the letter was for him! she protested, looking at it with morbid fascination. I told her that she had better open it anyhow: it was better that she break the news to the old man herself before he saw the letter. "Do you think so?" she asked, looking at me timidly. She stared at the letter for a few moments, then started to open it. Her wrinkled old fingers were trembling so much she could not hold the paper between them. Suddenly she dropped it. "I can't!" she said. "I'm afraid."

I picked the envelope up and took out the letter. It was from my father's sister, back in the Old Country. My grandfather had died peacefully in his sleep, at the age of eighty-six, in the town in which he had been born.

"Povero vecchio, poor old fellow," muttered my mother, her eyes filling with tears. She took the letter from my hand and read it over again to herself, laboriously, for her vision was failing: she had to hold it away from her, and she pursed her faded lips and squinted her eyes and muttered the words half-aloud.

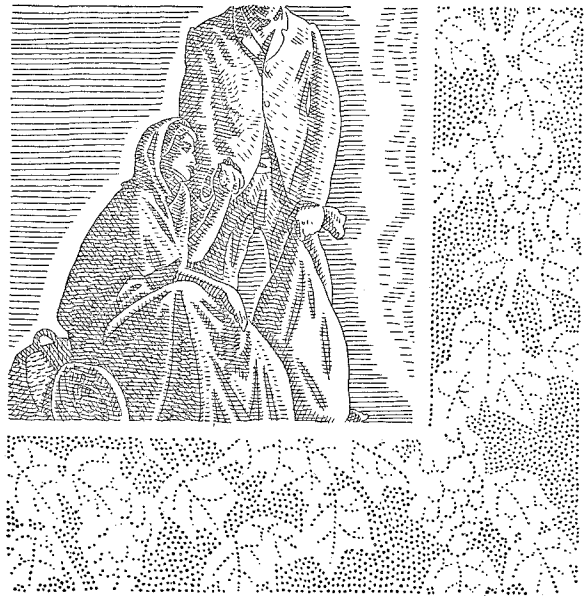
"Povero vecchio!" she said again when she had finished, clucking her tongue and shaking her head: and getting up suddenly, she hobbled to the phone to call my sister, Rose. She was no longer crying, and she dialled the number with the breathless excitement of one who has bad news to convey. "Yes, the old man, his father . . . isn't it a shame? The poor old fellow! Yes, in his sleep. . . . You and Frank had better come over. . . ."

Afterwards, we debated whether I should go downtown in the car and get my father. It seemed inconsiderate that we should allow him to come home, as on any ordinary day, on the street-car: but on the other hand, if I were to go after him he would want to know what was the matter. In the end we decided to wait, staving off for as long as possible the breaking of the painful news.

Towards five o'clock my sister and her husband came over from their macaroni factory, and a little later my oldest brother, Lou (who lived with his American wife in the flat below us), came home. Meanwhile, my mother had called my other brother, Vincent, who lived across the city, and also my other sister, Angelina. The market closed at six, and it was usually around a quarter of seven or so before my father got home: long before that time, the entire family was gathered together in our house, with the dutiful solemnity which a death in the family inspires.

It was the first time since Christmas that we had all been gathered together at once. My sisters and Lou's wife helped my mother prepare dinner in the kitchen: my brothers and brothers-in-law and myself sat in the living-room. We did not, however, discuss the event which was the reason for our foregathering—our grandfather was too remote from us for his death to have any immediate interest; we sat and talked about our personal affairs. Occasionally my mother poked her head

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



in and bade us not to talk so loud; once, when I snapped on the radio, she reprimanded me sharply. "What's the matter with you? You ought to know better than to turn on the radio tonight!"

At last we heard the click of the door opening downstairs, and my father's heavy tread. We all stopped talking and looked at each other. My mother came in from the kitchen, wiping her hands on her apron, her eyes filling with automatic tears: behind her stood my sisters and Lou's wife with solemn faces. We all stared expectantly at the door through which my father would enter. His heavy steps became louder, and then the door clicked and opened and he came in, his massive body and florid head seeming to at once fill the room and to dwarf the rest of us. He glanced surprisedly at us and at the white dinner table, with its gleaming silver and the gold-rimmed wine-goblets we used for "formal" occasions.

"What's the occasion?" he said jocularly in his booming, guttural voice; and then he saw my mother weeping.

"What's the matter?" he asked with quick apprehension. "What is it?"

None of us answered for a moment, and then my mother told him of the letter. He did not speak, nor did his face change expression. He stood there looking at her, and when she had finished he asked her quietly for the letter.

"Give it to him, Robert," she said to me.

I got the envelope from the mantel and handed it to him. He took the letter out and put on his glasses and read it slowly. *"Povero padre,* poor papa . . ." he muttered, and suddenly his eyes filled with tears. He looked up at us, dumbly, from over his glasses. My mother touched his arm consolingly and started to speak. He did not listen to her: he looked at the table.

"And what is this, a party?" he asked angrily in Italian. He stood looking at us for a moment, then turned sharply and went into his room.

There was a moment's silence.

"Well, for Christ's sake!" began my youngest sister's husband.

"Shut up," said Lou; and then, to the rest of us: "He's right. We should have known better. You go on in with him, mama; we'll take the stuff downstairs and eat."

He did not leave his room the rest of the evening. When, later that night, I passed their bedroom on the way to my own room, I could hear him sobbing.

II

For a long time it hung on our living-room wall, our only picture of my grandfather: a photograph taken many years before, on the occasion of his only visit to this country: a big squarish picture, showing him and his five sons, holding each of them a stein of beer aloft: a picture of curiously modern design, the heads ranged circularly upon the page, the arms at stiff right-angles, the steins placed like points in a modernistic abstract composition—this picture I always loved to look at, it had such a curious feeling of finality to it, as family groups always do seem to have somehow. Here was the endless wheel of life, father and sons, the old and the young: one saw the generations that had lived and spun their destinies before them, one felt the generations that were to come. Of the last, I was one: I was the product of these, I and my brothers: some day, perhaps, our own children would look upon similar portraits of their own fathers, and so looking, would they not feel something of the mystery and portent of life, of the wheel that spun endlessly, of the beginnings and the endings, the fulfilment and the source?

A family is like a universe. Each of its members is a planet around which a thousand stars revolve. For a long time, in the early years, in the years of childhood and adolescence, one does not think of this: one grows into life like a quivering tentacle, and neither the beginning nor the end have much interest, for one does not think about them. Myself, for example, born in America, brought up in the schools and the streets of the New World, creating a life and being created by it: what knew I of Italy? A country built like a deformed shoe depending from maps of Europe pored over in musty schoolrooms: a name, a flavor, a language which my people spoke: what reality was there in all this, what remembrance? Later one thinks: one puts pieces together, like solving a puzzle: one sees a design grow beneath one's preoccupied fingers; but is it true? Is this, then, really the source?

Once we returned, my father and mother and I. I was very young then, no more than eight or nine. It was the only time I ever saw my grandfather. After his death I thought of this returning. So remote, it seemed: such a long, a very long time ago. How many years had passed, how many lives had I and my parents not lived since then! Now I was grown and my mother and father were aging; my grandfather was dead. And this past, this continuous flow of life that was like a river—sometime in the not too distant future it would flow over us also and we would join, in the category of the non-existent, that old man who had himself, with the many others, swelled the tide and now lay at rest at last, in the earth of his beloved homeland, beneath the fair Italian sky.

I say that I saw my grandfather, but did I ever really see him? The eyes of childhood are large, but their vision is very small. He was an old man already when we made that trip to Italy, nearly seventy he must have been, sparse, withered, and small, with a cackling laugh and bright little eyes that were like brilliant black beads: that much at least I remember. Other things I remember also: trains, the towering build-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ings of New York, the magical boat with its corridors and stairways and decks and rails, the great billowing sweep of the ocean, so blue, so glass-like beneath the limitless sky: the bay of Naples and the streets of Naples—fragments all of them, pieces of a childish puzzle which older fingers seek to resolve. What did that child really see? That was a real and tangible world into which he entered, that summer so many years ago: but what, what? The mind is like a series of rooms, some of them closed forever, or almost forever: one seeks to unlock these chambers, one fumbles for the key: one sits, as I sat on a certain evening in our living-room after my grandfather's death, and looks at a picture, and tries to remember.

I was not yet born when that picture was taken. My grandfather had come to this country to see his sons again, whom he had not seen for so many years: and of this visit my father had many stories to tell us. To begin with, my grandfather's train arrived early, and not speaking English he had to wait on the station platform for several hours, not understanding why his sons were not there to meet him: when my father and one of his brothers did arrive, he did not recognize them and refused to believe they were really his sons, thinking, perhaps, that they were some New World crooks trying to take advantage of him, knowing he was a foreigner. My father always roared when he told of this incident, of the two huge men (my father and his brothers all weighed above 200 pounds) bent above the wary, gray-headed little man with his cackling laugh and toothless mouth, trying to convince him that he was really their father: he was at last persuaded of the genuineness of my uncle, but steadfastly refused to accept my father, who, being the youngest of his sons, was the most remote from his memory. It was not, indeed, until my father reminded him of an incident of his childhood that he would believe they were not trying to play a joke on him: he then cried out: *"Eh Luigi, mio figlio, mio bambino,* my son, my baby!" and laughing and crying, he kissed him and hugged him and then, dancing nimbly up and down on the station platform, he pretended to spank my father's impressive posterior.

Looking at the picture of my grandfather surrounded by his sons, I remembered this incident: I remembered also other stories my father had to tell of my grandfather's visit, of how, though he had not a tooth left in his mouth, he would eat only the dry crust of bread, refusing the soft inner, the *mollica,* content so long as he had a glass of wine to dip it into: I remembered also my father's favorite story of his father, of how, when he sought to present him with a going-away present of a cane as a mark of filial respect and devotion, my grandfather refused it, saying, with a sly chuckle and a twinkle of his black eyes: "But people are liable to think I am old!" These fragmentary pictures of him were much more vivid than my own recollections, for being stories told to me by my father they had the literary advantage of form and a frame: my own memories were too nebulous and obscure, too clouded over by the fogs of distance and time. For a long time I sat there, looking at the picture on the wall, trying to remember: there was something related to that trip we had taken to Italy which I wanted without quite knowing what it was to remember, something which seemed pregnant with meaning and which all of my mind was striving to recapture. But what? What was it?

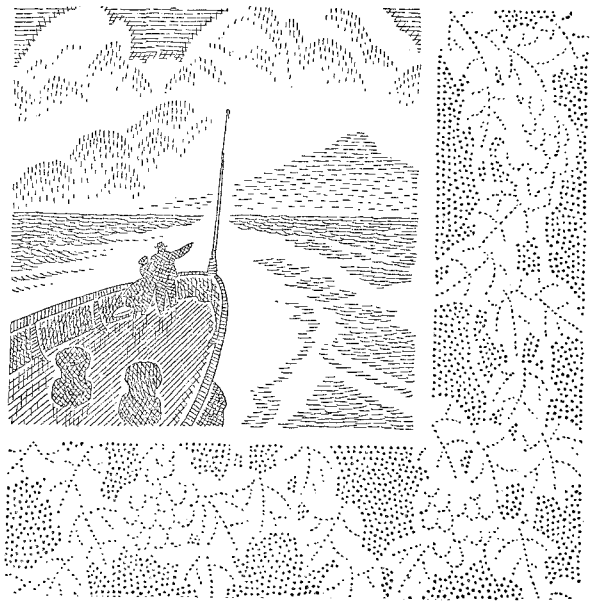
At last, in impatience, I got up and went into the kitchen, where my father was eating his dinner.

III

At this time in his life my father was past sixty but he looked, aside from his white hair, no more than forty-five: his eyes were clear, his complexion smooth and ruddy, he had all his own teeth (aside from a glint of gold in the back of his mouth when he laughed): he had still the magnificent physique which he had gotten from his mother—who was a pretty big woman, you bet. Whenever people complimented him on his youthful appearance and his abundance of good health (as people were always doing) he would invariably give credit to the two factors in his life which he claimed were indispensable to health and longevity: hard work, and a good stomach. That breadth of shoulder, those bulging biceps and knotted forearms which even now hoisted sixty-pound crates of lettuce and celery as easily as though they were sacks of feathers—these were his inheritance from the coal-mines of his youth. As for his stomach—surely that organ in his case was made of cast-iron? No ordinary stomach of mortal flesh and tissue could possibly digest, as his digested, platters of peppers hot enough to singe the lining off the intestines of less fortunates: and who but a man of iron could take, as he could take, a slice of raw steak from the meat my mother would be preparing of a Saturday night for the Sunday dinner and, sprinkling it lavishly with salt and pepper, gulp it down with great relish and then go promptly to bed—and this after a hard day's work at the market? *"Buona salute!"* as he himself would say.

I sat down at the table opposite him and poured myself a glass of wine. He was having a light repast of spaghetti, meat balls, salad, and wine—no hot peppers, because for a couple of days his stomach had not been feeling so goddam good. In the corner, next the stove, my mother was shelling some peas. She had a big pan in her lap and her nimble fingers, which could never stand being idle, were cracking the green cylinders open happily: *plink plink,* went the peas into the pan: *plink,* then *plink!* I lit a cigarette and took a sip of the wine and looked at my father across the table.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"Do you remember that time you and I and mama went to Italy?" I asked.

He looked up at me from over his plate, questioningly, and with something of the suspicion which a blunt and straightforward man feels for those of more devious ways.

"Sure," he said, wiping his mustache: "what about it?"

"I've been thinking about that trip ever since grandpa died," I told him. "I've been trying to remember things that happened, but it's been so long ago I can't remember very much about it. How did we happen to go?"

He paused in his eating and looked at me, chewing slowly, a little surprised, perhaps, at my questioning: "Well," he said, scratching his head, struggling to anticipate what it was I wished to know, and to find the answer to it——

"We went for the trip," broke in my mother. "Don't you remember, Robert? I bought you a new Bust' Brown suit," said she, smiling happily; and to my father, in Italian: "Don't you remember how 'cute' he looked?" He grunted and lifted a forkful of spaghetti to his mouth. "I remember so well," said my mother. "That was when we sold out the store in Salt Lake. . . ."

But, of course! something inside of me exclaimed in recognition. Salt Lake, where I had spent my childhood: the store: a smell of salami and dried olives, the dark space beneath the counter where I had played at being a storekeeper, the dusty, sun-spilled street outside. . . .

"Oh, yes," I said to my mother. "I remember. I used to play back of the counter, isn't that right?"

"But yes!" said my mother, smiling her old woman's smile and nodding her head in recollection. "Do you remember when you pulled the flour-barrel down on top of you?"

My father looked up and laughed. "That'sa right," he said. He looked at my mother with a curious expression. "By God that'sa long time ago," he said softly.

She nodded her head. "Yes," she said. "Yes. . . ." She picked up a pea and opened it abstractedly: my father returned to his spaghetti.

"But this trip, now," I said.

"Oh, yes," said my mother. "The trip."

After nearly thirty years in this country, over twenty of which they had been married, over twenty of which they had worked hard, brought into the world five children, and raised themselves up from the status of a poor immigrant coal-miner and his bride to prosperous and solid members of the great middle-classes—after all of this my mother and father had decided to visit again their native land, to rest, to travel, to see once again the familiar but almost forgotten scenes of their childhood. My sisters were both married, my oldest brother was away from home, my other brother was working and old enough to take care of himself: hence it was I, the baby, whom they decided to take with them. Most of these details I now, nearly twenty years later, learned for the first time, in answer to questions: but Lou now, I would ask my mother. Where was he? And Vincent? And what about Rose and Angelina, were they married then? And the store. How did you happen to sell it? Well, look, how long had you and papa been married then?

What did I want from them? What, what? Sometimes they themselves would look at me quizzically, as though to ask that question of me: and could I have answered? One digs, sometimes, without knowing what it is one wishes to excavate, without, indeed, having any foreknowledge of what one's spade will eventually unearth. But there was something in all of this I wished to grasp, some essence, some meaning. Now, in the decline of their lives, my mother and father sat before me in our kitchen, the kitchen of their later years, the last of the kitchens they would ever know together: the big man with his ponderous shoulders and massive head, the little woman with her wrinkled face and bitter mouth: what of this life they had lived together, this inner life that had been their dream and of which I, one product of it, knew, at the last, nothing? A handful of pictures, the pictures of their wedding, snapshots, family groups: these were all that remained of the forty years they had spent together, these, and memories—those memories which I saw mirrored in their eyes when they referred to something that had happened long ago, those memories which I myself possessed of other times. Now, sitting in our kitchen, retracing step by step that trip we had taken so long ago, they remembered—and I, I also remembered.

IV

The town in which my father was born was a small village three or four hours by train from Naples. It was set in the midst of a rich agricultural district, and it was necessary to walk, or ride by horse and cart, another five miles in order to get to the village after alighting from the train. Here my father's family had lived for generations. His father, and father's fathers before him, back to the fifth or sixth generation, had been sextons in the local church—an honorary position, and one in which the family took great pride. The village itself was a relic of feudal days: most of the three or four hundred inhabitants, at the time of my father's birth, were pitifully poor, living under a condition of what amounted to serfdom in allegiance to the grand *Signori,* who owned the land and the vineyards and who were themselves, no doubt, descendants of feudal barons. Of his boyhood in his native village my father in later years had many stories to tell us: of the poverty, the back-breaking work in the fields for a few pennies a day, the condition of almost hopeless economic slavery. All day

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

long from morning until nightfall he and his brothers, along with the other peasants, worked in the fields, with only a piece of hard black bread (baked once a week in communal ovens) to sustain them: here, beneath the hot Italian sun, they tilled the fields and gathered the grapes, but always with a dream in their hearts, the dream of some day escaping to America.

Now, after nearly thirty years, my father was returning home. It is not difficult to conceive the emotions he must have experienced upon revisiting, by the standards of the villagers a rich man, the town in which he had been born. He was as rich as the richest man in town, and more: he, the sexton's son, had become himself a grand *Signore,* with a business and property and money in America: what was more, his person had attached to itself the glamour of the traveller from far places. Of all of this I, of course, at that time understood nothing. We were visiting the town where my father was born, back in "Yurrup" (itself as vague a place in my imagination as darkest Africa): I remember being struck by how small everything looked, and lethargic: the primitive stone houses, the profound quietness, a quietness that seemed to emanate from the very dust of the roads. Young as I was (and I have never forgotten it) I felt very strongly this sensation of life being at pause, as though the flow of living had been caught in a pool and remained forever stagnating. If I had been older, the term I would have thought of to describe this sensation would perhaps have been resignation: the village and the inhabitants of the village, the very earth itself seemed resigned to a way of living that had continued too long to admit of change. Then, it seemed to me only to be very quiet, profoundly, almost fearfully so: the hum of the insects at night, the bark of a dog, the murmur of human voices—each sound, magnified against the intense stillness, set my heart beating wildly and I longed with a fierce, almost panic-stricken desire for the familiar noise of America, the clang of street-cars, the hum of machines, all the raucous clatter that was for me associated with home.

And what did my father feel? Standing in a doorway looking down a road, embracing some childhood's friend he had not seen for thirty years, sleeping in the house where he was born, smelling the familiar yet long-forgotten odor of the earth his childish bare feet had trod—what did he feel?

I remember he wept when he embraced his aging father and sister: indeed, I remember that for the first couple of days he wept a great deal.

We were, of course, received like visiting royalty by what few inhabitants of the village remained. I say "what few" because in the thirty years my father had been away the inhabitants had dwindled to less than half the number occupying the town when my father was a boy. Most of the peasants (at least those of my father's generation) had like my father and his brothers emigrated to America: others had moved to the cities of Italy, to Naples and Florence and Milan and Rome, in quest of the fortune which my own father and his brothers had sought in America. As a result of these emigrations a great many changes had taken place, the most arresting of which was the alteration in the fortunes of the great landowners. So many of the peasants had gone away there were not enough to work the fields at a profit, and the vineyards had in large part shrivelled from disuse. Besides this, most of the remaining villagers had, with money sent to them by sons or relatives who had found success in America, bought little portions of land for themselves from their former employers, so that they had become independent of the *Signori* who in turn, as a result of all these upheavals, had become, some of them, as poor as the poorest inhabitant.

Every day there were visitors at my grandfather's house, to see "Francesco Altieri's son, who had just returned from America": they would come in, sometimes in groups of five and ten at a time, dressed in the picturesque garb of the Italian peasant (the women in their stitched skirts and aprons, with their earrings and chains and bracelets of gold, the men in the simple, hardy attire of the farmer): they would greet us with solemn deference, even awe, and sit at the rough table and ply my father with questions. And was it really true that every house in America had a stove? And was it really true that every man was equal, and could be "king" if he wanted to? And was it really true that every house had its own water-closet? (These, from people who had lived their lives under the most rigid kind of class-distinction, in houses so poor that they cooked in pots suspended within rude fireplaces, with neither plumbing nor toilets other than the crude back-houses which one saw in the early morning with both men and women waiting their turn, each after the other.) At my father's answers they looked at each other and shook their heads incredulously and exclaimed aloud: they would ask the same questions over and over, as though to relish again the delight of the magical answers. My father beamed and expanded and talked incessantly: my mother sat complacently and stroked my hair and nodded her head from time to time in agreement.

We were given dinner after dinner. Each of my grandfather's friends had a "party" for us in his house, one after the other: they prepared huge meals (for which they probably had to pay for months to come, in personal denial): the wine flowed, and the guitars spun their lilting music into the night, and we heard over and over again the songs and the dances of Italy (to which my mother and father listened, sometimes, with tears in their

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

eyes). These, the entertainments given us by the simple villagers: but the highlight of our sojourn was a visit to the *palazzo* of Don Carlo Metroni Salvatelli, the patriarchal aristocrat and landowner for whom my father had worked as a boy.

That we should be summoned to pay a visit to this gentleman was considered by my father to be the highest of all possible honors, for not even the thirty years he had spent in America had completely eradicated that sense of class-distinction and what may be termed tribal loyalty which had been so deeply ingrained in him during his childhood. For though he might now be a rich and respected man and, in America, one whose life had no relation to the world which revolved around this village, nevertheless once he had set foot in the town of his birth the old relationships automatically sprang into existence. That the old aristocrat should summon him was therefore a great honor, and even my mother was impressed.

Don Carlo lived in a great stone house on a hill overlooking the village: there was a wall around it, I remember, and a great many fig and chestnut trees. We made the journey by horse and cart, my mother and father, my grandfather, and myself. Curiously enough, my grandfather, who had been somewhat in awe of his impressive son and daughter-in-law, became, once the invitation was brought to us, himself officiously paternal. For while his son might be this distinguished "personage" to whom he could not but pay a certain deference, that element of impressiveness belonged to America and the life my father lived there: over here, in relation to Don Carlo, he was simply one of the low-born villagers, and this fact must be impressed upon him—and by whom else but his own father? "Now be careful of your manners!" he said over and over again on our way to the old aristocrat's *palazzo,* scowling at my father warningly. "Don't forget who you are: he must think well of you. He must think well of you!"

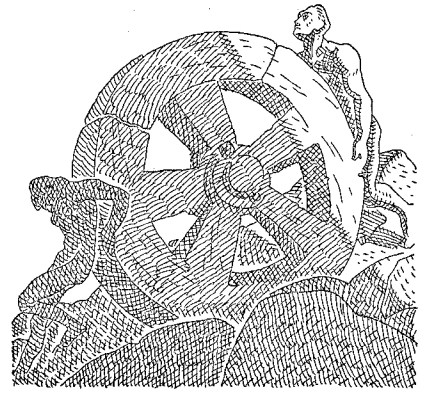
He was apparently terribly afraid that my father would not give a good impression to Don Carlo: perhaps this very success of his son's, of which he unquestionably was proud, seemed to him in some obscure manner disrespectful to Don Carlo, as though my father had wrongfully exceeded his natural destiny, the destiny which nature had designed for him in relation to the old aristocrat: "Don't forget yourself, now," he kept saying, looking anxiously at my father out of his brilliant black eyes: "remember always who you are, and do not speak unless you are spoken to."

We were admitted by an ancient woman servant and led to a kind of patio, where Don Carlo was seated at a table reading. Everything about the house gave indication of genteel poverty—the worn furniture, the peeling walls, the threadbare curtains: indeed, I remember stumbling over a crack in the stone floor of the entrance hall. Don Carlo himself looked a thousand years old, a lean, sparse, withered man, with a skin like yellow parchment and amazingly long hands covered with dull gold rings. Unlike my father and grandfather, his eyes were blue, and I remember that they looked like a sudden glimpse of the sky, they were so striking in his gaunt face with its thin, toothless mouth, its aquiline nose and bushy black eyebrows, its narrow forehead sweeping into a shock of fleecy white hair that reached almost to his shoulders.

We were all, with the exception of Don Carlo, painfully ill-at-ease: my father and grandfather stood awkwardly and held their hats and shuffled their feet. "But sit down!" said Don Carlo, smiling charmingly: and calling to his servant, he ordered that wine be brought.

"So!" he said, after the wine had been poured. "Tell me about yourself, and America."

He treated my father as an equal: indeed, there was even a certain deference in his manner. And my father? He



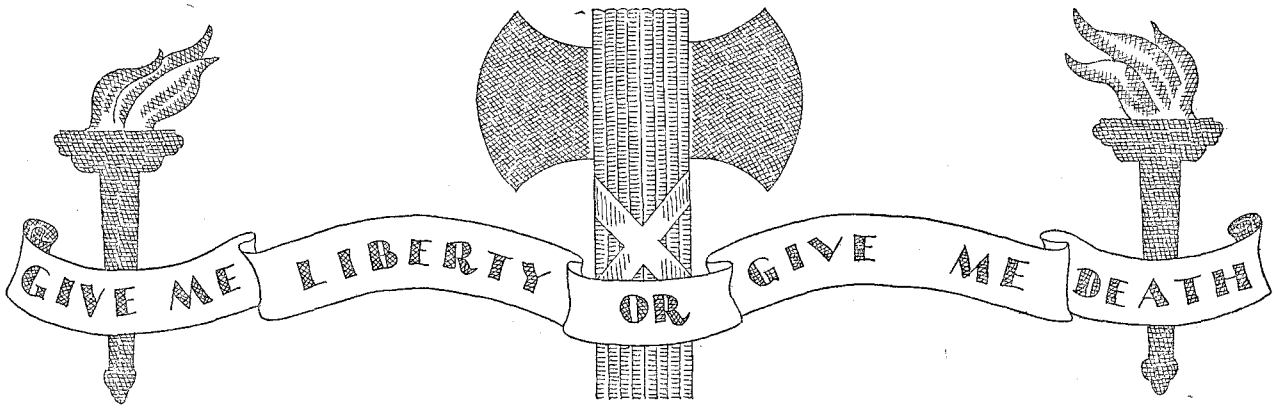
expanded, his chest swelled, his tongue and voice waxed warmer and warmer. Story after story he told of America and his own adventures there—so much so that once or twice my mother looked at him in embarrassment. Don Carlo nodded his head and chuckled indulgently, toying with his rings; but as the time wore on he no longer nodded his head and he no longer chuckled: he sat and twisted his rings and looked out of his ancient blue eyes at my father with an expression of—what? what? how to describe it? Alas, it is so long ago it is difficult to remember: does time and the imagination trick me into thinking it was wistfulness—and envy?

But all of a sudden—I do not know for what reason—my father stopped short in his speech: he seemed all at once to become self-conscious and uncomfortable. It was as though he had become aware for the first time of the old aristocrat's eyes on him, and his own eyes shifted uncertainly, and his face colored slightly. There was a moment of silence.

"Well!" said Don Carlo. "You have gone far and done much. Here, we are too old to go anywhere, and there is no longer anything to be done. We wait for death, and that is all."

Now, nearly twenty years later, seated in the kitchen with my mother and father, I remembered this incident, and remembering it I knew dimly what it was I had been trying to recapture from that return my mother and father and I had made to our source. But how to express it? There are emotions and ideas so subtle and complex it is difficult to capture them in words. Life and death, the old and the young: the life and death of towns, cities, countries, of people and of classes, of customs and of creeds—death always, and life always, the one feeding from the other endlessly. Once I had seen it, so poignantly I have never forgotten it: the old aristocrat there in his crumbling house and decaying civilization, knowing within himself, inevitably, the last downward revolutions of the wheel of his life: the young man of the earth who was my father, knowing within himself, with equal inevitability, the upward revolution of his own destiny: wheels within wheels. For a moment they had met, and crossed.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Fascism at the Door

By Percy Winner

Sinclair Lewis's novel, "It Can't Happen Here," has dramatized the possibilities of fascism in the United States. Mr. Winner's article (accepted, incidentally, before Mr. Lewis's novel was published) shows the underlying reasons why fascism could happen here

MEN and women brought up in America, taught from earliest childhood that liberty is a political right, a social blessing, a precious personal possession almost comparable to physical health, naturally find it exceedingly difficult to believe that sane human beings can be willing to *surrender* liberty. We can't conceive of any one voluntarily *giving it up* except under great pressure. We've had dinned into our ears such grandiloquences as "Give me liberty or give me death."

When we try to understand why governments in foreign countries have been able to rob whole peoples of most of their liberties, we blame the weakness of the safeguards of liberty. In traditions, laws, institutions, forms of social process, habits of mind, we seek fatal flaws which may have led to the decay of these elements on which rights to personal liberty were based. We are prone to cling to our assumption that the free institutions weren't good enough or strong enough, the people weren't vigilant enough in their defense, ardent enough in their development. We may recall Nevinson's lines: "For freedom, we know, is a thing that we have to conquer afresh for ourselves, every day, like love; and we are always losing freedom, just as we are always losing love, because, after each victory, we think we can now settle down and enjoy it without further struggle."

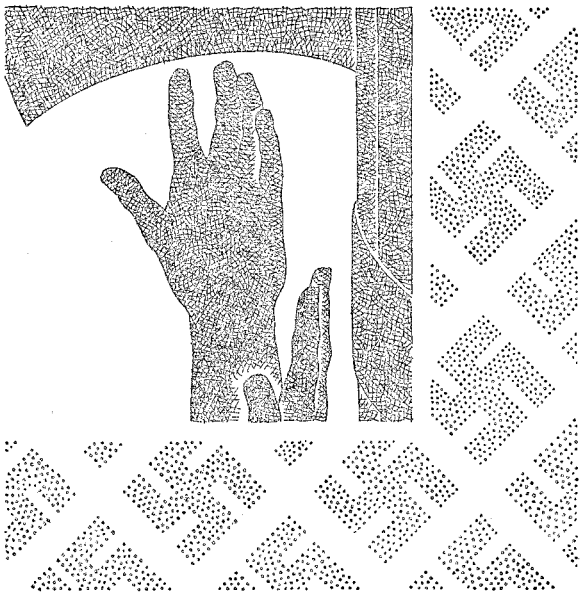
Undoubtedly there is some truth in the idea that loss of liberty is directly related to weakness or incompleteness of the institutions and the traditions affording it legal and social sanctions. In Russia only a trivial proportion of the total population lost anything when a political system based on denial of personal liberty took over the state. Very few Russians had ever been free in the American sense. In Italy the situation was only superficially different from that in Russia. The great mass of the population, millions of illiterate, poverty-stricken peasants, although living under a constitution technically assuring them a measure of liberty, had mighty little of it. Germany, however, presented a somewhat different picture. Despite an absolutist monarchy, oligarchical army, a feudal social system, a large portion of the population had the sort of liberty Americans could recognize. They were, moreover, conscious of the need to defend it. Understanding and appreciating its value, they were jealous of encroachments on it, ever eager to strive for more of it.

To free citizens of the great democratic nations, America, Great Britain, France, the triumph of fascism in Germany was shocking because it seemed to show that even fairly well-established, extremely well-defended libertarian institutions were not immune to destructive pressure; moreover, because it suggested that a large number of apparently ardent lovers of liberty had suddenly, inexplicably, become unfaithful. Nevertheless most Americans still believe German liberties were taken away rather than surrendered. They see in nazi methods proof that force is needed to perpetuate the effects of the robbery. Despite the difficulty of making the German case fit with the Russian and the Italian, Americans satisfy themselves with extensions of a definition of compulsion. Anti-libertarian pressure in Germany, they decide, was more efficient, not only stronger physically, but more brutal, more subtle, more cunning, more perversely skillful, armed with guile and treachery.

It is time Americans realized the inadequacy of such an explanation; time they recognized that fascism's destruction of liberty was accomplished in large part by popular consent; time they understood that if fascism was possible in Germany, it is also possible, libertarian safeguards notwithstanding, in France, Great Britain, and America. Forms, of course, must differ, but the essential which concerns us here—destruction of liberty—is constantly the same.

Fascism is no exception to the commonplace rule that revolutionary power varies in inverse proportion to the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



strength of the institutions it overthrows. Political revolutions succeed when a nascent, usually minority force attacks at an opportune moment a senescent, moribund, usually majority force, already rotting within itself. Old Russia was an empty shell when the bolsheviks made their bid for power. The Italy of Facta was a trembling, disorganized band of political weaklings when Mussolini made it a fascist state. Social democratic Germany's government was reigning but not ruling. In a very important sense, the three revolutions were parts of a single revolution having relatively little to do with the specific national situations, and broad enough in scope to include additional revolutions in this generation in other nations of western Europe and America.

They are part of a general revolution against liberty. The few score thousands of zealots, fanatics, opportunists, adventurers, or mere hirelings who provided militant spearheads for Lenin, Mussolini, and Hitler had as their allies millions of men who had become enemies not only of free institutions but of liberty itself, who weren't robbed of liberty, who surrendered it gladly, threw it away. Millions of men in the world today respond to fascism as to a liberating revolution, as to a messianic doctrine relieving them of a burden, with passionate affirmative conviction as though liberty had already rotted into decay and become a putrefaction in their nostrils.

Those who love liberty, who believe in freedom, who cherish it as they do their most precious personal possession, must recognize its ill repute. Americans must see that their own country is far from immune from the contagion of the world revolution against liberty. They must understand that the danger comes from within their country as well as from outside it, that the peril is as much of voluntary capitulation as of attack. Americans who seek to defend their liberties must become aware that the enemies are voices of defeatism inside the citadel of freedom as well as the adventurers, agitators, self-seekers, and panacea-mongers who try to break down the walls. They must, finally, try to get insight into a remarkable fact which makes the great contemporary anti-libertarian revolution differ from most other political upheavals—into the fact that the terrain on which it is being fought is as much individual psychology and universal religion as it is national politics and international economics.

Nietzsche is said to have been first to make a clear distinction between two types of freedom, one, freedom *from* something, the other, freedom *for* something. A long succession of historians have noted that men generally act effectively in defense of what they have or what they think they have, rather than in quest of what they don't have or think they don't have. The anti-libertarian current would have little strength if it were merely an emancipation from outworn values of liberty. It's far more than that. It presents to its human components affirmative values seemingly superior to the old ones, gives them the sense of offering something positive, worth while fighting for. It is both counter-revolution and revolution, emancipator and fulfiller. Its concept, borrowed and adapted from communism, of permanent revolution is its own version of democracy's constant vigilance in the service of freedom. Fascism is perpetually embattled in defense of anti-libertarian values, as though the concept of democratic freedom were as shocking to it as fascism's destruction of freedom is to libertarians.

Almost all the moral values of the libertarian state and of the fascist state are at opposite poles from one another. Since the antithesis of liberty is slavery and of freedom subjection, the fascist state is a slave state, almost by definition. But any one who has lived for any length of time in fascist states must become impressed by the fact that much of the slavery seems to be voluntary. He must, after estimating accurately the effect of the military-police organization and other instrumentalities of compulsion in bludgeoning acquiescence, note that the fascists appear to enjoy their slavery, to desire it. He must observe that they have fanatical enthusiasm for their master—the state, abject devotion to its leader; that they swooningly accept the idea of a transfer of sovereignty *back* from the people to the state.

The key to fascism's ability to accomplish this transfer, to its evocation of a vast popular appetite for slavish submission, lies in the fact that fascism, more than a political movement, is a secular religion. It binds fealty by conversion to a faith as well as by compulsion. Before fascism or anything like it arrived on the political scene, this appetite for submissive, self-denying faith already existed. Fascism had the insight to recognize it and the skill to organize and exploit it. The malevolent genius of fascism, it cannot be too strongly emphasized, lay far less in creating or compelling submission than in detecting, stimulating, and organizing an already existing submissiveness.

Materialistic interpretations of fascism gloss over or leave out entirely this aspect, so necessary to an adequate understanding. If exclusively materialist interpretations were comprehensive, fascist countries would be seething with unrest. For fascism from the materialist viewpoint has taken away a great deal and given very little in return. There must be something else to explain why it has so strong an appeal, why its attitude toward liberty seems so attractive to so many people, why the same attitude is similarly attractive in communist Russia.

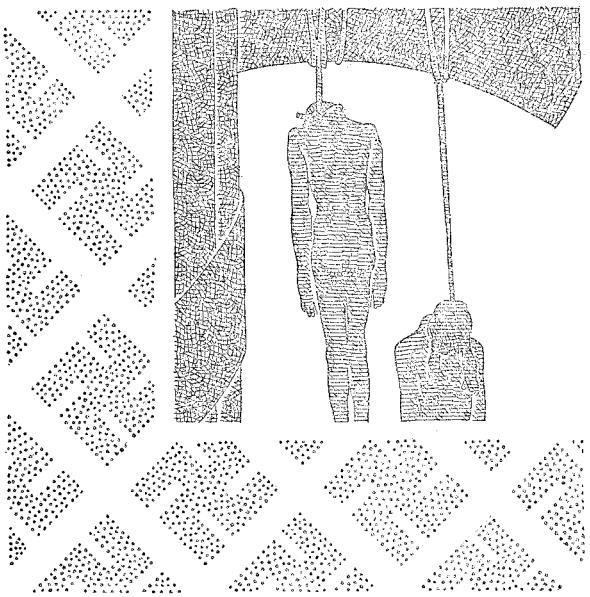
Socialists, liberals, democrats point out, and quite properly, that the ideal of liberty has been gravely injured by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the fact of material distress. Liberty in poverty, they say, is no match for slavery with promises of plenty. Security, thus, rather than slavery is the welcomed antithesis of liberty. A willingness to sacrifice freedom, they maintain, arises from painful recognition of the material insecurity with which during the present generation it has more and more come to be associated. Freedom to starve or to suffer want is not hard to give up.

But under fascism in actual practice the degree of exemption from such insecurity is not observably related to the degree of willingness to give up freedom. A large proportion, a majority of fascists are definitely not better off materially than they were before the advent of fascism. Nor does fascism emphasize material well-being. The "full dinner pail" does not occupy an important rôle in its formulations: self-sacrifice does. Yet fascists remain faithful. What the materialists do not see is that the flight is not merely from insecurity, not only from personal liberty: it is from personal responsibility for insecurity, from personal authority, from all forms of personal acceptance of responsibility.

Alfredo Rocco, a famous Italian fascist "philosopher," once said that fascism was needed in any country in which the state was weak or had become weak. He meant the state in relationship on the one hand to the people and on the other to its responsibilities to the people. The fact is that fascism is indicated in a state in which the people have strength which they are unable or unwilling to use for themselves. The springboard for fascism is a general mass emotional mood, temper, attitude. No precise definition of such a mood is possible. It is compounded of various inabilities and unwillingnesses: a people in such a mood flees from dependence on reason and intelligence, fears to live as free, responsible, authoritative men and women; welcomes, even craves submissive surrender to crushing, tyrannical authority; yearns for panaceas couched in the language of faith, expressed in old, trusted, magical, mystical, religious symbols. Fascism and Russian communism stem from such a mood which provides the emotional mainspring for the general world revolution against the responsibilities explicit in personal freedom and personal authority. Millions of men in other countries are merely awaiting the call to turn away from, to reject liberty, in order to submit to and serve an external, religiose authority.



Americans who understand the willingness of their countrymen to submit to so-called regimentation exclusively in terms of profligate expenditures of the New Deal have surprises in store for them. It is far more likely that the already legendary personality of Mr. Roosevelt has much to do with it. His political opponents who hopefully scan down-dipping business index curves have not learned the lessons of fascism. Mussolini and Hitler are none the weaker for deterioration in standards of living. Their American equivalents will concern themselves, as they do, with self-sacrifice, after their American forerunners have completely metamorphosed the motif of the full dinner pail. America is slowly but surely taking its place in the modern revolution against liberty.

In America it is unlikely that we shall come to the point of an avowed hatred of liberty. We do not love liberty less, we love authority more, need it emotionally. Our variety of fascism will certainly not be called anything like fascism. It may be a defense of Americanism, even of the Constitution against latter-day distortions. It may be a species of saving America from the New Deal, or saving the New Deal from its "traitors" and "perverters."

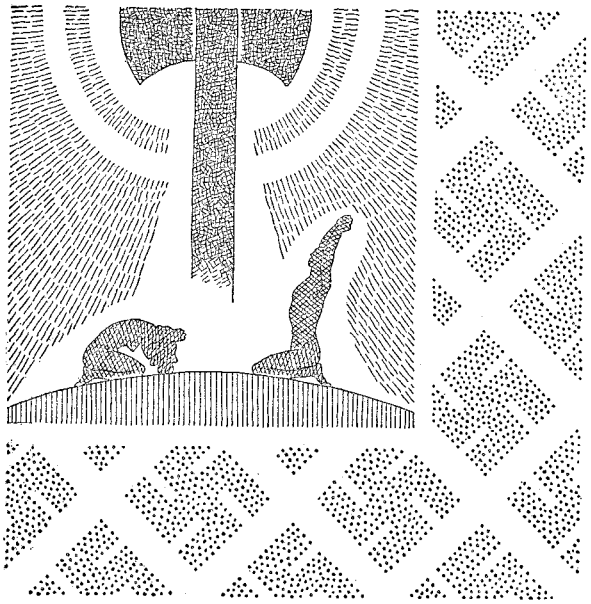
The form but not the substance will differ from European varieties. The Longs and the Coughlins are portents. Those anti-fascists who warn against Mr. Roosevelt are a little hasty. Doctor Wirt in his silly, confused, hysterical outburst was probably closer to the truth. The President hasn't the requirements of an American fascist leader, neither the vision nor the ruthlessness. True, his terminology tends to be apostolic. His keen political intuition has led him to draw a parallel between the Schechter decision and the Dred Scott decision and vaguely to discern an impending conflict of great mass forces. Beyond gentle touching of immediacies, such as, for example, obstruction of the federal state's authority by the forty-eight other juridical authorities, neither his training nor his temperament will let him proceed.

But destruction in whole or part of liberty and of the libertarian system in the United States does not depend on emergence of a leader, or even of a strong fascist movement. We already have plenty of such movements. Some move by stealth at night in the countryside. Some move arrogantly by day in the highest places of well-peopled cities. And the nation which produced frontier Methodism, the Ku Klux Klan, Prohibition, Taylorism, Fordism, the New Era, modern advertising methods, go-getterism, super-salesmanship, high-power propaganda, Colonel Lynch, Saint Tammany, and the New Deal will not long need to lack leaders who can use the religiose, fanatical technic.

Our variety of fascism depends more directly on the emergence of an emotional appeal to outweigh liberty as a political right, a social blessing, and a precious personal possession. It depends on development of a chosen-people messiahship which can be whipped into shape as partner of a national will-to-power. It may perhaps come in the form of a divinely ordained mission to save the white peoples from the Asiatics. Lothrop Stoddard and Madison Grant may some day be canonized.

For, the basic principle of fascism as a secular religion—as a religiose na-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



tionalism or national religion—is rooted in missionary zeal, the zeal of a particular nation on a universal mission. Fascism is always totalitarian. Religious and authoritative in essence, it must have divine sanction for a state whose totality contains a God symbol. It can obtain such sanction only on the basis of a choice. The inspired messiah-leader must have visions, messages from God to justify his mission.

As a secular religion, fascism provides myths to replace the presumably scientific verities from which its non-religious and anti-religious political predecessors obtained their symbols. The nation takes the place of the individual in a mythical projection of the Darwinian struggle for existence. The authority of the state takes the place of personal conscience, freely exercised.

Hope being a primary commodity of messiahship, fascism has incorporated in bizarre and fantastic forms into its mythology all it could find and use in the hymnal of libertarianism. The Nietzchean superman becomes the hierarchical, aristocratic superstate. Socialist internationalism becomes fascist universalism. The idealism of material sacrifice replaces the idealism of material comfort. An oppressed social class, chosen by historical determinism to free mankind from class war, becomes an oppressed, wronged nation elected to lead the world out of its materialistic impasse.

The symbols of idealistic progress and of scientific perfectibility permit fascism to exploit millions of men, fawning, cringing, immolating themselves before a religiose type of state. Nature had chosen man for the supreme mission among living things. Nineteenth-century science and scientific morality said so. The sovereignty of the people was indirectly the choice of nature. Fascism put the choice back in the hands of God, and created myths to prove its own divine election.

Fascism's choice is national or racial, or both. Russia is holy again. Italy has resumed the unfinished work of Constantine. Japan has discovered, says Yosuke Matsuoka, that: "Providence calls on Japan to undertake the mission of delivering humanity from the impasse of modern material civilization." The German nazis have gone to ancient Persia to get a Jehovah of their own, have brought obscure Zarathustrian elements into their nordic Valhalla.

The nazi racial fantasy is no more and no less absurd than white America's rallying cries against yellow Asia. In Germany at least the Aryans *are* old stock. In America, the western part of America where some of our own racial antipathies flourish, *old* stock would be Athapascan and Koluschan, American Indian of Asiatic stock.

The author of *Hitler Over Europe* maintains that the nazi racial theory merely cloaks nefarious purposes of capitalists whom Hitler serves. He suggests that the boundaries of Aryan Germany coincide with those of the economic empire Thyssen would like to carve for himself out of Europe. But he neglects to point out that Nordicism and Aryanism germinated long ago, and that they have been officially adopted to serve religious as well as economic ends.

Use of a racial myth was needed in Germany, and may be needed in other fascist countries. In Italy it wasn't necessary because fascism had ready-made a fount of religious authority of which the boundaries were imperial rather than racial. Saint Peter had chosen Rome. Mussolini was in Rome. The divine and unquestionable nature of Italian fascist authority came directly from the Bible through Christ's messiahship, the Apostles' mission, the Holy Roman Empire, the divine right of Kings, and, finally, the sovereignty of the people. Fascism accepted the mission to reject the next-to-the-last link in the chain, to destroy the heretical, sinful sovereignty of the people. Russia, too, needed no racial myth. The country was steeped in Byzantine religiosity.

Those who expect fascist régimes to collapse because they increase rather than relieve suffering fail to see that the religion of fascism feeds on suffering. Those who expect to counteract fascism merely by relieving material suffering fail to see that fascism exploits not so much the suffering itself as its moral and psychological consequences, its stimulation of a latent appetite for resignation and acceptance.

Fascism is a danger in the United States not because the depression continues but because the continuation of the depression is producing a concatenation of circumstances typically inviting fascism. Private powerful capitalists are eager to take advantage of the collapse of our laissez-faire liberal economic system, and the impending collapse of its successor, the New Deal. They want government aid to remould the system for the benefit of monopolism. There is increasing governmental confusion. There are flashes of breadth of vision immediately nullified by lack of decisive virility, or by lack of the courage to defy the veto of economic interests. Leaders are imprisoned alternately by their own illusions and by the realism of economic giants with whetted appetites.

At the same time there are present on the scene a mob of putative messiahs and a plethora of messianic objectives. There is an increasing inertia of will, apathy of judgment on the part of vast numbers of simple men, tired of a meaningless struggle, influenced by the triumphant accusations of aspirant dictators and oligarchs. There is a growing appetite for explanations which are emotionally convincing, particularly for those which offer accessible scapegoats.

If any large proportion of the American people is won over to acceptance of crusts with a eucharistic significance, it will take more than whole loaves to win them back. The old-fashioned lib-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

erals can inveigh to their hearts' content against paternalism and regimentation. The people want a faith and temporarily respond to the dynastic implications of the President's name. "Our Father which art in the White House. . . ."

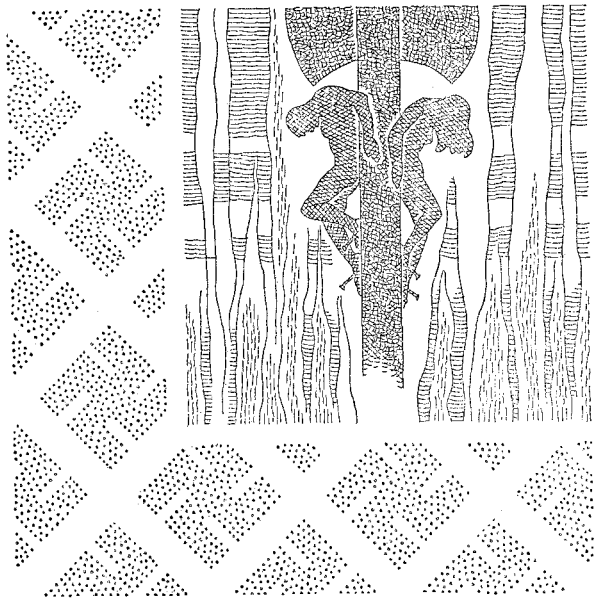
Lest we underrate America's capacity for revolutionary mass violence, let us remember that we had a great modern revolution which took the form of a civil war between the states. That civil war in carnage dwarfs the petty horrors of fascist civil wars. It continued to punish scapegoats for more than a generation after arms were put aside. We are violent and vindictive. We are listening to the Longs and the Coughlins, prophets of revolutionary wars of the fascist type with plutocrats, Wall Streeters, and Jews as scapegoats.

Whatever fascism we have is sure to come from the west and south. It will certainly seem to militate against "high finance," which, in the long run, will suffer no more than it has suffered in the fascist countries. A relatively small group closely allied with the messiah will rake in the spoils.

The chosen-people myth, racial or political or whatever it may be, will coincide with a defense of the material interests of this chosen and choosing group, and with a repulsion of the interests of its competitors. Wall Street's situation in New York will afford the fascists the fortuitous connection they need between opulence and impurity. Our fascists must, of course, be xenophobic and eventually anti-Asiatic. Not even nazi Germany had the good fortune which provides a single sacrificial altar to which Japanese competitors of American business and Jewish competitors of Wall Street bankers may be led at the same time.

America's territorial situation provides an ideal basis for a chosen people legend. Something religiose can be added to the traditions of the Monroe Doctrine, the Freedom of the Seas, and the Open Door in Asia. Olney and Hay are important, but Stoddard, Grant, and Hearst are more important. We are already chosen to guard and exploit the western hemisphere, but when our fascists come upon the scene, we shall turn toward the Pacific. We shall hear much about Negroes in the south, Mexican Indians in the southwest, Asiatics in the far west, and not-quite-white foreigners in the east.

Nor are indigenous political precedents lacking. We have the Hamiltonian tradition from which a President in the Jeffersonian tradition is borrowing heavily, apparently in the hope that it will help him against opposition in the Jacksonian and Populist tradition. Our fascism probably entails a merger of the Hamiltonian tradition with the Jacksonian, producing a social revolution in the name of monopoly. The work of the war between the states will be completed. Economically, the issues are already clear. The modern economic structure must be truly national, over-riding, nullifying if not destroying the political and legal implications of a free and voluntary federation of states.



But the Jacksonian "little" people must do the work of the Hamiltonian hierarchs, must do it gladly as though it were their own work, as though they were being relieved of burdens, as though they were to profit. Their emotions will obscure their plight. The creation of willingness, eagerness for the contest is conditioned not only on lack of intellectual clarity, but on the rejection of intellectual criteria. American liberty and individualism are already being used as battle-cries by the worst enemies of liberty, presaging a confusion of ideas and principles ideally propitious for fascism.

As happens in all fascisms, liberties will not be stolen because they are ill-defended, nor lost because of the weakness of their institutionalization. They will be surrendered. Indeed, they are already being surrendered. Libertarian exhaustion will do the lion's share of the work. If we get our messianic fascism, the giving will become a violent, passionate throwing away. Always in the name of liberty and also of *newness,* words sacred to us, liberty will be exchanged for submission to "good" authority.

Inter-regional conflict, since the war between the states our political equivalent of class war, will undoubtedly play a part. Nor should it be forgotten that the final crushing of regionalism is one of the essential tasks of fascism. Abroad, such regionalism has been connected with vestigial feudalism. With us it is associated with states' rights federalism. Both abroad and in America regionalism gets its death warrant through fascism. Modern economic processes demand the execution. It is always carried out, however, in the name of social justice.

Always a vigorous centralizing force, fascism transforms government into a huge vertical trust along the lines suggested by certain great monopolistic industries. But whereas the hierarchy of true power is brutally material, the apparent hierarchy of value is spiritual and moral. In America, fascism will undoubtedly emancipate modern industry from the deadweight of checks and impediments based on anachronistic political controls. It will accomplish expeditiously, ruthlessly, an overt politicalization of economic monopoly for the benefit, of course, of the monopolists.

But individual fascists will not see this aspect of the revolution, nor, if they see it, will they care. They will be returning to true sacred Americanism which had been perverted by domestic traitors under the influence of, working with and for foul foreigners, inspired by false prophets. They will not see that their "new liberty" is a blood brother of old servitude. The totalitarian state will include them in a special communion with divine messianic symbols. They will gladly give up fool-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ish notions about freedom in order to prevent sweated Japanese labor from creating a military machine able and ready to invade our Pacific coast.

There must be scapegoats outside the borders as well as inside. Fascism is universalist. Its component men and women make sacrifices to help the nation or race accomplish a mission for itself. But the mission would not be a mission if it did not rest on absolute, universal, ordained virtue. America which set out to save the world for democracy need not take lessons in the emotional technic of salvation. America which has not yet learned that it saved the British Empire from German competition cannot hope to learn the intellectual technic of international sagacity. It is likely, however, that a real American fascism while pleasing to begin with to Downing Street will not long remain an attractive spectacle.

America's world war experience differs from Germany's and Italy's. The American Legion and other veterans' organizations do not seem equipped for the rôle of European ex-soldiers. Not at present, at least. President Roosevelt, by his denial, and Father Coughlin, by his affirmation, of a special rôle for them may yet furnish a fascist calling for them.

More probably the task of the European ex-soldiers will in this country be assigned to the soldiers of business, the technicians, the petty executives. An American leader may combine into a fascist technic elements drawn from business methods and habits; industrial rather than military organization; latter-day pioneering; gangism; lynchism; and ward politics.

The ranks of our liberals, socialists, and radicals are overflowing with minor fascist leaders and officials. Our neurotic supermen are so tired of their endless escapisms into blissfully puerile ivory towers of art, intellectualism, and theoretical revolution that they will be delighted to serve as squad leaders. Our submissive submen have been trained by the millions for many years by advertising technic for the final genuflections. We have not one but scores of Goerings, not one but thousands of Goebbels, not one but hundreds of Thyssens. Our potential fascism is bigger and better: we are American.

Our problem of religious sanction for authority is less difficult than Hitler's. We have a great religious tradition which has played a tremendous rôle in our national life. In it a primitive fanaticism which need not quail from competition with fascist religiosity has never quite lost its primacy. Men came to these shores to worship God. They brought authority with them.

Many of the settlements on American soil were motivated almost exclusively not by a desire for liberty but by a desire to be free to submit to God's will. Many came here as people chosen to save the true faith based on true authority. Puritan America was subservient to authority. The political tradition of Hamilton, which has always survived temporary setbacks, goes back to the religious tradition of John Cotton and Jonathan Edwards.

It took two hundred years, says Parrington, to disintegrate a body of dogma that "conceived of human nature as inherently evil, that postulated a divine sovereignty absolute and arbitrary, and projected caste divisions into eternity."

To disintegrate it, yes: to destroy its effects, no. The thing which most baffles foreigners who come to America is the resistance of the Puritan tradition, its continued co-existence with its apparent antithesis, American materialism. No one who knows America can deny that Puritanism is a living force, that it is, even when superficially absent, a constantly and easily exploitable residue in American life.

Puritanism can be mobilized by a fascism. Fundamentalism is potentially fascist, truly fascist. The authoritative priestly tradition of John Cotton will not, however, lend itself as easily to utilization by an American fascism as the originally libertarian tradition of the great dissenting denominations, the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians. From this quarter can come precisely the sort of authority Hitler would like to bestow upon his nazi religion.

Mecklin speaks of "this naïve supernaturalism" which even now "constitutes the deadliest handicap of American Protestantism in its strenuous efforts to adjust itself to a society that bases its values on democracy and looks to science for intellectual guidance." That handicap would be an American fascism's advantage.

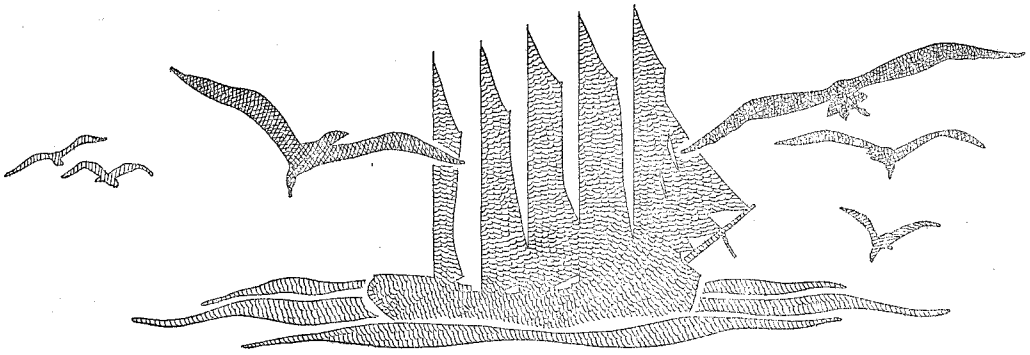
An American fascism would not have what Mussolini had in Rome. It would have something even better for its own purposes. It would have two great traditions to draw on. One, the New England tradition, takes up the Hebraic authoritative selection and leads it through Calvin to America. The other, of the west and south, provides "crass emotionalism, anti-intellectualism, deeply implanted antagonism to the 'respectable' and cultured classes, crude psychology of sin, and ferociously harsh Hebraistic ethics." An American fascism need have no difficulty with its authoritative sanction. The churches will help.

It is time, it may well be repeated, that Americans realized the inadequacy of an exclusively materialistic interpretation of fascism. To call fascism a maniacal tool of megalomaniacal capitalism does nothing to protect us from it. The point of attack must be those elements of capitalism which require such methods.

To note that fascism destroys only those liberties which have already withered is a meaningless gesture of diagnosis if it merely points in the direction of restoring faith in liberty and free methods. It's too late for that. The time for that will come again some time in the future, but this is not the time. Men want and need authority. If the authority offered by fascism is to be made less attractive, it must be countered by some other, more attractive authority. Anti-fascism must offer something not better but more emotionally compelling than fascism, a different slavery, a different election to a superior selection from somewhere on high.

In the coming numbers—"What Does Russia Prove?" by Eugene Lyons, "Modern Utopians" by Reinhold Niebuhr, "Working for the Government" by C. Hartley Grattan, "The New National Domain" by Rexford G. Tugwell.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Mutiny in a Calm

A STORY

By O. R. Pilat

A new writer whose novel, "Sea-Mary," is soon to appear

When the engineer came out on deck from the storeroom, he missed the banging of the booms. The swell was gone, the deck lay flat and still. From the starboard rail, the water seemed smooth enough to watch stars in it. No need to look aloft. The lower sails, gray in the moonlight except for black edges of shadow up toward the gaffs, hung idly as ever.

The calm was beginning to get on everybody's nerves. Already weeks out of San Juan and plump in the middle of the Atlantic, the schooner faced more weeks ahead to Seccondee. If she had real engines now, the engineer thought, instead of just a donkey or auxiliary engine for sail-handling and pumps for pumping, she might get somewhere.

Noise aft probably meant the captain raising hell again. The other day the Old Man tramped back and forth on the quarterdeck for half an hour, muttering: "Not enough wind in a week to blow out a match. No wind at all. Nothing. You can't do nothing without you get the wind. Nothing at all. Never get to Africa this way. Never get anywhere. Stay here and rot. Maybe just as well. Stay here and rot forever . . . stay. . . ."

Still, maybe the Old Man wasn't so crazy. Maybe he knew something. Maybe the winds were played out.

More noise came from the quarterdeck, but the engineer went for'ard, making a mental note to pump out later. The great hulk of the mate was slouched by the rail near the engine-room. He was the last person the engineer expected to see. He asked was the engineer joining in the fun. What fun? The shark-catching, of course.

"Where you been, if you ain't been back there?" demanded the mate. "I been waiting for you nearly an hour."

The engineer couldn't say he was in the storeroom with the cook's wife. He didn't say anything. What business of the mate was it? Besides, what did the mate of the *Anna Swan* have to do with the donkeyman, anyhow?

It took time for the mate to come to the point, though the engineer had a feeling there must be one. After all, a man doesn't wait an hour for nothing.

The mate began by saying he wasn't feeling none too good, cause his kidney medicine was gone. Throwed over by the Old Man, like it was an accident. The Old Man took everything he owned, almost, his gun and that pair of aluminum knuckles, and now his kidney medicine. He had another pair of knuckles hid away, though, he said, in a place no one would find them. He knew how to use them, too, when the chance came. Maybe it was coming pretty soon.

The engineer thought he was going to hear something exciting, but no, the mate went off on another tack. He started talking about how he always wanted to be captain, even in the days when shrouds and stays were made of rope, before wire came in, even in the days when crews were shovelled aboard by crimps for mates to hammer into shape with brass knuckles.

"In those days the Old Man went ashore in a top hat. In a top hat! He was king and the rest slaves. He was the whole show.

"I was in the ship *Alice Kennard* in 1880, Captain Humphrey of Yarmouth, Me.," recalled the mate. "We left Baltimore that year and were in foreign trade seven years before coming back to the States. The Old Man decided where to go and what to carry. He was king, I tell you."

"What you leading up to, mate?"

"Only this. There are two classes in this world. The kings, the captains, the owners, they're one class. Them what work, they're the other class. I sweat my blood sixty years for the bosses, and what do I get? Mate on a crate like this!

"It took me nearly sixty years to know where I belong. Now I'm with the under ones against the bosses, with the foc's'le against the Old Man, if you want it straight."

"I notice you talking a lot for'ard," said the engineer, suspiciously.

The mate drew back his lips in a snarl, showing the black snags of the teeth in his mouth. "You don't notice nothing! You don't know nothing! You don't see nothing!" He pounded the engineer's chest with a finger like a blackjack. "You're marked lousy on this ship, and you don't know it. You started the men kicking over the grub. You made the Old Man look a fool when he ordered you away from the galley. . . ."

"So what. . . ."

"Listen, you, you don't know where your bread is buttered." The mate's

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tone was quieter, more persuasive. "You don't even know how I help you. If the Old Man didn't think you had me and the crew back of you, he'd shoot you down in a minute. Get that?"

"Not quite," said the engineer, feeling low around the stomach.

"Well, you better, you thick German bastard. If it wasn't for me, you wouldn't even be able to talk to the cook's wife."

"Oh, no?"

"No. The Old Man told me to keep you away from the galley and the cook's wife. I said I never saw you around the galley or with her. He didn't dare do anything then. He thought I was with you."

The engineer tried to say something, but the mate didn't give him a chance.

"You better listen, not talk so much. You got a breather on this ship, that's all. The Old Man's watching and waiting, and when his chance comes, he'll strike. All right. You and me are watching and waiting, only we got to hit first."

The engineer said that sounded like mutiny. The mate looked around before answering.

"Christ, that's only a word," he continued, in a lower voice. "Like the Old Man. I'm the Old Man on this ship, or should be. The *Swan's* my vessel. Like the time the captain of the *Ewan Seward,* a Bath ship she was, got a stroke and almost ran her ashore off the Horn, twenty years ago or more. I saved her then, buried him at sea, and brought her into port with a jury rudder. When I got to Frisco, what did the owners do but slip in a young fellow, a relative or something, as captain. I slapped him down and walked ashore."

"Well?"

"Only this, I don't walk ashore no more."

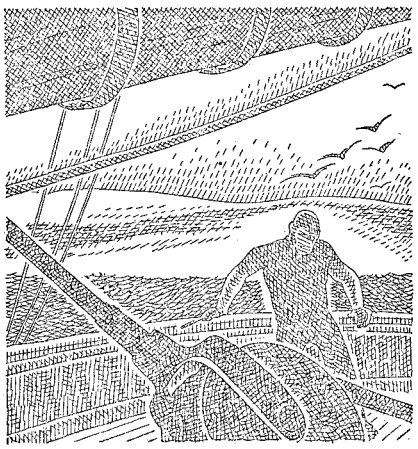
"You're talking pretty strong, mate."

"It's my last chance. That is, our last chance. The Old Man'll get us, if we don't get him. Mike and Ike will follow you, and maybe Monk. The other two sailors don't count. I don't know about the bos'n, but if we get the Old Man out the way—some dark night soon—we'll be all right. Oh yes, we got to watch the cook."

"Cook's harmless."

"Maybe so, maybe not."

"What would you do with the ship?"



"That's easy, no one pays any mind to sailing vessels nowadays. I know a couple of places we could sell the cargo and skip before word got around."

The engineer protested it would mean death if caught, and running away the rest of their lives, anyway.

"I thought you had guts," said the mate, grabbing his arm so fierce the nails cut in. "We don't have to take the ship, if we don't want to. No one needs know what happens to the Old Man some dark night. He's half nuts with the calm anyway. Tramping up and down muttering about not enough wind to keep his pipe drawing and like that. He's got bats in his belfry, rats in his forechains, he's nuts I tell you! We look for him one morning and he's missing and nobody's surprised. And the office has to give me the ship. For all they know the captain went over for a swim."

The engineer thought a minute, then said he didn't like killing.

"Oh, you don't like killing," imitated the mate, bringing his face close. His breath was like an open sewer. "Too bad about you, still full of the shore fear of life. One man more or less! Like one seagull more or less, or one shark. You can make a hundred sons in a night's drift ashore. You can make thousands if you keep trying. With a cook's wife around, you might even get some licks in at sea."

Something in the mate's leer got the engineer mad, reminding him of the cook. "You old toad," he said.

The mate drew back in surprise. "Now don't go off the handle. Maybe you're fancy. You and me, we're the same side of the fence, we hang together or we hang separately, as the feller said. I'm speaking plain, cause I figure you got some sense."

"I don't like some of your plain speaking!"

"All right, all right. I've given you the chart. Look it over and shape your course and we'll talk again. And don't say nothing. . . ."

"I won't."

". . . to nobody."

"Don't worry, I won't."

The mate lumbered off in his bare feet without saying good-bye. The engineer hesitated a minute, then decided to follow him aft. He had to pump out soon, so he might as well see about this shark-fishing business.

There was lots of excitement on the quarterdeck. All hands were there helping, except Ike who was on lookout. The Old Man himself was plopping a line with a wire leader as protection from bites and with a piece of salt pork on a big hook as bait. There was an extra light fastened near the taffrail. The engineer looked over and noticed the pork on the hook near the surface, floating like a white flower. He didn't see any sharks.

The nearest sailor, who was Monk, whispered excitedly there were three sharks down there, big fellows. Pup sighted them first, just before sundown, playing around the hull, each of them with a tiny blue-striped form over its broad nose—a pilot fish. The sharks must be hungry, all right. One of them bit flat the blades of the turner of the taffrail log. Nobody mentioned the sharks to the Old Man for a couple of hours and when he heard about them he went wild, shouting around for the cook like mad, to bring salt pork for bait.

The pilot fish sniffed at the bait at first, going ahead of the sharks and then back to them, as if warning them away, but the last few minutes the sharks were getting bolder.

"Sharks following a ship means death aboard," said Monk. The engineer pointed out the ship wasn't moving, so the sharks couldn't follow. It was the same thing, the sailor insisted.

The Old Man heaved and grunted. He had one. He held the line tight, hardly giving the shark an inch. You could hear the splashing and see the white foam down there. The bos'n and Mike tailed on the line. When the shark got half out of water, right be-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

low, the Old Man had Swede drop a bowline around the tail and Monk another one further up the body.

With the strain off the hook, the shark was lifted by the other two ropes. Everybody was puffing and sweating in the excitement.

It proved to be a tiger shark, the kind with a couple of extra hinges in the jaw so it can open its mouth wider. It looked about twelve feet long, with a couple of hundred teeth in five or six rows. When they got it up, it thrashed around so the rail trembled, and its ugly mouth sliced bits out of the wood.

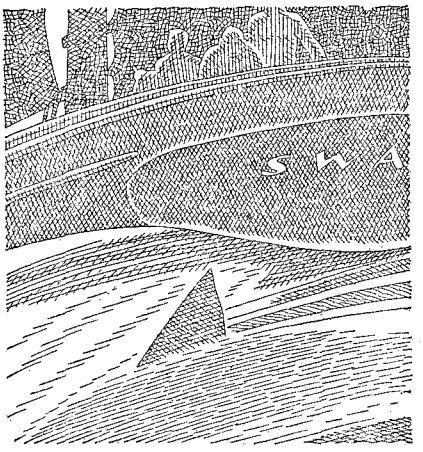
A sort of scream came from the cook as the shark curved its back and snapped upward. The sailors only laughed as the cook, trembling at his narrow escape, shrank away. The captain kept a tight hold on the rope, saying, "So you will, eh, so you will try to get me, eh!"

Letting go one hand, the Old Man got out his knife and started to sharpen it on the shark's own splotchy, dirty gray skin, whose flintlike plates ship carpenters sometimes use for sandpaper. As if surprised, the shark stopped moving.

"'Commodatin' fellow, ain't he?" chuckled Monk, and the others laughed.

When the knife was good and sharp, the Old Man gave his grip on the rope to the bos'n and shifted down toward the tail, where he began sawing the skin. As the steel reached flesh, it made a crackling sound. The shark was thrashing around again, but the Old Man kept on sawing. An opening appeared on top and widened, then the tail fell off, turning twice in air before slapping the water. One bowline came free. The hook was out of the mouth long ago, so the shark was hanging by the other rope, caught under the chest fins.

Blood was dripping from the hole in the tail, drop by drop at first, then faster. The shark seemed less violent as its strength ebbed. The captain didn't want to waste his rope so he reached down to loose the bowline. It was close work, but he did it. Almost with the last snap of the jaw, missing the captain's fingers by an inch, the shark plumped into the water, and then seemed to come back to the surface, like a plank. It drifted a little astern, the stream of blood from the tail looking purple in the water, by the flickering light.



"One for Oscar," crowed the Old Man. Every one knew Oscar was his poodle lost overboard in Havana harbor once and et by a shark. He always said that shark never even turned on its back the way sharks are supposed to do to bite, but just swam over and, when it got past, the poodle was gone.

The captain ordered the cook to put new bait on the hook. Swede came over to the engineer, who was standing by the starboard quarter bitt, and whispered about how one time he was in the German steamer *Maromana* which ran on the beach at the point of the Magdalena River in Colombia, and they had trouble with an alligator which et two natives who were taking out cargo to lighten her. They trailed the alligator by his slick and tied him up and painted the old rascal white from head to foot, then let him go. Next day they found him all chewed up by other alligators. Same thing would happen to the shark. Other sharks would smell the blood and eat it now, because it couldn't steer or fight without a rudder. That was why the Old Man cut off the tail.

The first shark was hardly out of sight, sinking slowly like a coin, when the second one bit and was hauled up the same way. The engineer noticed each time the pilot fish was missing, and Swede explained the pilot fish deserted its boss like a rat from a sinking ship. Sometimes it would swim around for days before it found another shark to tie up to.

"Another for Oscar," said the Old Man, as the second tail came off. He did all the cutting himself. This time he held on to the tail, handing it to Swede to dry out and tack on the bowsprit later, to bring a breeze.

The second shark dropped back into the water, helpless and dying. The hook was baited by the cook again, for the third shark still hung around down there.

"They're awful dumb," said Monk, loudly. "Biting one after the other like that. Maybe no one will kick the bucket if we get this last one."

The cook's wife was standing over by the binnacle, the engineer noticed. He wondered when she came out and how she took the slaughter but he couldn't catch her eye. She was staring at Monk, as if something the sailor said worried her. The engineer wanted to go over and comfort her, but after what happened in the storeroom between them, he hardly dared, specially with her husband around.

Excitement had all the men now. When the third shark took the hook, Mike made motions with his sheath knife, to suggest cutting it up. The Old Man nodded and began heaving in. The cook's wife got curious and went to the rail and looked over and screamed.

The cook dragged her away by the arm. "What's the matter with you?" he demanded angrily. "It's only a shark. It'd eat you if it got a chance."

"It looked human, like a woman," she cried, covering her face with her hands. She stumbled off along the starboard side of the after house, the cook staring but making no effort to follow. The engineer ached to go after her, but decided it would be foolish. He looked at the shark, near the rail by now, and saw what she meant by likening it to a woman. The way the rope went around the shark's chest gave it breasts and made the fins stand out like folded arms. Even so, it was a woman's notion. Everybody knew a shark wasn't human, it had cold blood.

The Old Man got the shark over the rail with an extra heave. Once it was squirming on deck, he set an example by hitting it with an axe. The sailors went to work on the shark with their knives, pushing each other aside like beggars fighting for bakshish. With all the tangle of rope on the quarterdeck and the thrashing of the shark, it was a miracle somebody wasn't hurt. The cook was in there, too, cutting away with the best of them, swinging a long-handled razor. Swede yelled out that part of the shark, along the back to-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ward the tail, was good eating, but the cook wasn't interested in food.

"I'm fixing him so he don't eat me," the cook said, trying to be funny.

The others were too busy to laugh. Hating sharks like landsmen hate snakes, they were cutting it to bits. The engineer had no knife on him to join in, and he noticed the thin, stoop-shouldered bos'n kept out of the mess.

Finally the Old Man put the axe away in its place by the bulkhead of the after companionway. By now the men had the liver and the stomach of the shark out. The captain came back and reached in with his bare hand up toward the head and wrenched something loose. It was the shark's heart. With a yell, he threw it on top the white wheelbox where it stuck like glue and went right on beating in a bloody smear. It was about half as big as a doorknob.

The air was hot and close and still. The men drew back a little to catch their breath and look around a little, figuring the fun was over. Instead, the Old Man got an idea and rushed to the rail for a belaying pin. He grabbed the iron and weighed it in his fist a second, a nasty smile on his lips, his pig eyes gleaming.

He came back and raised the pin and brought it down with a crash on the wheelbox, splintering the wood. Somehow he missed the shark's heart. His failure led to a flurry of angry blows, about half of which found the mark. The red bits of muscle continued to throb.

There was something awful about the captain's rage, the engineer thought. His own chest seemed tight and heavy.

From behind him came a fierce whisper. "They're brothers, the shark and him." It was from Monk. The engineer turned to stare and gasp at the savage look on the sailor's face.

"They're brothers, cut him up too!" Monk whispered again.

The engineer turned to see if anybody heard. Apparently not. The captain was raising the pin again and again. He didn't seem to know anybody was around.

They all were watching the captain, except the bos'n, who was leaning his elbows on the house, staring for'ard, as if he didn't want to look.

Only the captain was moving now. The others were like statues. Nothing moved, yet something changed. Shadows shifted somewhere, though they all stood as before in a rough circle around the remains of the shark.

The engineer squinted at the patch of yellow thrown by the light above the strongback holding the yawl. Black was edging in on it. The mate. His feet weren't going, so far as you could tell, but his body was sliding to port, like a cat after a bird. Why was he working over to the other side? To cut the captain off from the coachhouse, probably. And then what?

Others were watching the mate. Mike's long horsey face was black with a scowl, his underlip thrust out. Monk crouched low by the bitt. Pup stood near the binnacle, hands up and out almost to shoulder height, the right one grasping his bloody knife. Even Swede seemed threatening in the dim light. The cook was standing by the far rail in shadow so deep it hid his face, and the bos'n was still staring for'ard.

The bos'n wheeled suddenly, as the Old Man brought the pin down again.

"Get a bucket to clean up this mess, Mike," he said, sharply. Barely moving his position, the giant Finn swayed backward as if about to plunge at the bos'n.

Snatching a marlinspike from his belt, the bos'n stepped across to the wheelbox and touched the Old Man on the shoulder with his other hand. The captain turned as if about to swing on him instead of the shark's heart, then shook himself. As his eyes went round the circle, fear came into them.

"My God," screamed the bos'n in a high voice. He was pointing to the north'ard sky. "Look at that squall! And we monkeying around a shark! We got to get that spanker down in a hurry."

The captain looked first and then everybody else. The sky was clear. In that blank puzzled second, the captain jumped high in the air like an acrobat, vaulting over the red pulp on the white wheelbox.

Sensing the trick too late, the mate scrambled ahead, but the captain had the screen door open in a flash and ducked down the companionway.

At the slam of the door the mate stopped short and straightened up.

Alongside the bos'n, who had his back to the wheelbox and his spike ready for trouble, came the cook, eyes round and scared, his long razor held out in front.

The mate cleared his throat. "Listen, bose," he said, hurriedly. "Even if you are seeing things, I give orders on this crate, and I take them only from the captain. Get that. Now boys, step for'ard lively. Mike, get a bucket to clean up this mess. You better be in your engine, chief."

The mate didn't have to say the captain was getting his gun. Everybody knew. In a minute, he would be up, shooting. The mate's idea was to pretend nothing happened. Maybe it would work. The engineer leaped ahead, only to hit a tangle of scrambling bodies at the corner of the house. He elbowed his way past and raced along deck, as if death was at his heels.

In the coming numbers—short stories by Nancy Hale, Jo Pagano, Virginia Bird, William Faulkner, Alvah Bessie, Morley Callaghan, August Derleth, Mary M. Colum, Caroline Gordon, and Nash Buckingham.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STRAWS IN THE WIND

SIGNIFICANT NOTES IN WORLD AFFAIRS TODAY

Why Blame It on the Papers?

A Footnote to Crime

By Paul Hutchinson

All the ballyhoo, all the destructive effect of the handling of crime news by the press could be stopped at once — and without passing a single law

SOMETHING must be done about crime. The American public seems to be as united on this as Ed Howe once claimed it was in its opposition to the man-eating shark. Articles galore and editorials without number call attention to the continuing increase in our criminal statistics, and insist on action. Universities open laboratories of crime detection and professors go forth to instruct women's clubs on the operations of the lie detector and similar gadgets by which Science—ah, Science!—is once more to come to the rescue of society. Radio and movie serials press home the solemn thought that "crime does not pay." Settlement houses (see news reels) exhort young hoodlums to grow up to be G-men. To cap it all, the Attorney-General of the United States holds a national conference, which is opened by the President, addressed by members of the Hoover cabinet, and played up in every newspaper as the start of the greatest of all offensives against the nation's most dangerous foe. "Crime," as the slogan has it, "must go."

All this is impressive in the picture it suggests of a mighty people rousing to grapple with the forces of evil. The only trouble is that we all know that crime is not going to go, and that all such reform drives are doomed to fall far short of their announced objectives. To put it crudely but realistically, we all know that while there is money to be made out of it, crime will not go, but will go right on, aided and abetted by slipshod police work, crooked lawyers, political protection, and newspaper and movie exploitation.

Because under all our bluster we know this to be true, we have widely fallen into the familiar psychological trick of looking for a scapegoat on which to blame our troubles. If only we can fasten on some outside influence which can be held responsible for our failure then we can gain two things. We can gain freedom from any sense of responsibility for dealing with the ugly economic facts that are at the bottom of the crime problem. And we can gain the emotional satisfaction of having a new object on which to exercise our powers of indignation, reprobation, and moral admonishment.

In our search for such a scapegoat, the press, by almost unanimous consent, has been chosen "it." Never a woman's club hears a paper on "The Menace of Crime" but the newspapers come in for a whacking. Never a preacher expounds this theme—and it has become a favorite of the contemporary pulpit—but the editor and the make-up man are singled out as the devil's agents at the bottom of all the increase in lawlessness. (There was a time when the movies shared this scapegoat rôle, but under the suave ministrations of Elder Will Hays the country is fast being persuaded that the forces of Hollywood are on the side of righteousness and J. Edgar Hoover.)

Now it is no purpose of mine to absolve the press from blame for its treatment of crime news. If it were not so obvious that grave abuses exist it would not have been so easy to build up this legend with regard to the malign powers of the newspapers. But there are certain aspects of this situation which seem to be commonly overlooked, yet which in fairness should be borne in mind. For example, it is at least worth remembering that if the press is guilty of exploiting crime and our criminal procedure for its own selfish ends, it is doing no more than everybody else connected with this mat-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ter is doing. That, I will admit, is not saying much in behalf of the press, but it nevertheless deserves saying.

More important, however, is the fact that the principal anti-social effects which are alleged to flow out of the paper's handling of crime *could be eliminated tomorrow without passing a new law, holding another convention, or adopting a single additional resolution if the courts really wanted it done.* The plain truth is that if the press is making a scandal of our treatment of crime—and I will not argue to the contrary—it is doing so only to the extent to which our officers of justice are willing, and frequently eager, to have it do so. When I listen to indiscriminate damning of the papers for turning our criminal processes into a circus, I become convinced that it is time for some candid speech. It is a modicum of that which, in the present instance, I desire to offer.

II

Criminal trials are of two kinds. There are the cases of the poor, the friendless, Negroes, the foreign-born, the slum dwellers—those without social importance whose misdeeds offer no temptation for dramatic journalism. They slide through the courts and to their allotted punishments almost as automatically as a motor-car through a Ford assembly line. As Warden Lawes has pointed out, these are the criminals who, with minor exceptions, go to the chair. On the other hand there are the cases which, for various reasons, have news value. News value to the press, and publicity value to the officers of the court. And such cases are almost invariably treated in such a way as to extract from them the maximum of both sets of values—circulation for the papers, and personal prestige for police, prosecutors, and defense counsel, and even for the judge. The outcry against the press has been shriller since the Hauptmann trial, yet the Flemington performance differed only in degree from the treatment accorded most major criminal cases in most states.

Several years ago Maureen Watkins, then a sob-sister on *The Chicago Tribune,* wrote a play giving a detailed account of one criminal trial in that city. To it she gave the title "Chicago." For obvious reasons, when the show came to Chicago its producers advertised it as a burlesque of criminal trials in that town. But any one who knew the case which Miss Watkins used as her model —knew the lady murderer involved, the eminent counsel for the defense and his methods, the states attorney and *his* methods, the judge and his courtroom—would have found it exceedingly difficult to point out in the script of the show where accurate reporting ended and the burlesque began.

The scenes at which audiences laughed most uproariously, taking them for unadulterated farce, were almost literal transcripts, not only of what went on in that particular case, but what continually goes on in news-worthy criminal trials. From the frenzied competition in the first scene between uniformed police and plain-clothes men to be photographed with the beautiful, though gin-dazed, defendant at the time of her arrest ("And be sure you get the name spelled right!"), through the hair-pulling jealousies between the several lady killers in the county jail over the size of their respective newspaper scrapbooks, down to the climactic courtroom scenes—the cameramen shooting from the floor at the defendant's crossed legs as she sat in the witness chair, and after her acquittal photographing her with her arms around the neck of judge and jury foreman—the play was as factual a presentation of important sociological data as any Ph.D. thesis turned out that year at the University of Chicago.

This sort of thing is undoubtedly the most scandalous perversion affecting criminal justice in the United States. It is hippodroming, and it does more to bring the efforts of the community to restrain lawbreaking into contempt than all other influences put together. But the observer who sees here only the malpractice of the press, and does not perceive that at every step in this process the press is under pressure to do precisely what it does, fails to grasp the realities of the situation.

Let us begin at the beginning, when the crime has been committed and the police set out on the criminal's trail. Immediately, we are told, the press does its best to thwart police efforts. All the criminal has to do is to read the papers and he will learn precisely where the net is being spread to catch him and how, therefore, to escape it. Very often this is true. But who gives the reporters their information as to what the police are doing? Sometimes, it must be admitted, the reporters, versed in police methods, make it up. But for every time they do so there are a dozen times when the police themselves come hotfoot with every development, all on the understanding that the newspapers shall give all credit to Captain Doyle of the Twelfth Precinct and Detective Sergeant Pestalozzi of the Homicide Squad and Patrolman O'Flaherty on whose beat the crime occurred as the men who are running the criminal to earth. The reporter who uses the tips these cops give him during this phase of the case can go as far as he likes in embroidering the story, but if he fails to play the game—that is, if he fails to see that the captain and the sergeant and the patrolman get the publicity they are after—he might as well turn his talents to the reporting of hotel arrivals or ship news.

Well, the arrest is made and the prosecution takes hold. The prosecuting attorney, or an assistant assigned to the case, meets the press daily, always assuring the reporters that he has "something new" ready for release. This begins with an announcement that the wretch now in jail is unquestionably the guilty party, and details are added to persuade the public that it knows exactly how the crime was committed. The next day there is promise of an impending confession. This confession may continue to impend for three or four days. Finally it comes, and is given to the papers to be printed in full. (Later the confession may not be so much as introduced in the trial; if it is introduced the chances are better than even that it will be thrown out.)

Then follow, during the weeks before the trial, day by day announcements of corroborative evidence unearthed, of "surprise" witnesses uncovered whose testimony will shatter the defense, of sinister facts discovered in the past life of the defendant, and of the thwarting of plans made by the defense to tamper with the jury. After the trial actually starts there is a daily forecast of what the prosecution intends to prove at the next day's session, a daily demonstration of the failure of the defense to establish its case, and a daily summary of the devastating nature of the points scored by the prosecution.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The printing of columns of this sort of thing before and during the trial undeniably makes the prospect for even-handed justice considerably less than zero. But where does the public suppose the newspaper gets it? And would there be hell to pay if a paper should refuse to play ball with a district attorney's office by printing such stuff! (Always, of course, being careful that due tribute is paid to the superlative legal talents of "Assistant District Attorney Cecil Sternberg, who is conducting the prosecution under the personal supervision of District Attorney Francis X. Flynn.")

But what is the defense doing all this time while the prosecutor's office is thus using the press to establish the prisoner's guilt in the public mind? Plenty! So far as criminal procedure is concerned, it is safe to say that in the most populous centers of the United States no lawyer can build a criminal practice capable of paying his office rent unless he can demonstrate that he is as proficient a newspaper space-grabber as the late Ivy Lee. The defense lawyer also has his press conferences. In them he asserts, as a matter of routine, that his client's confession has been extracted by third-degree methods; that he has an unbreakable alibi; that almost every day yields another "surprise" witness whose testimony will shatter the prosecution; that if the truth about the *corpus delicti* were known—assuming that this is the kind of case which has a *corpus delicti*—there would be civic mass meetings to honor the agent of retribution, whoever he may have been. And so on.

Even more important, however, is the attempt to get special reporters assigned to the defendant's side of the case. It is not often, to be sure, that a paper can be induced to order a star sob-sister to move in and live with the defendant's wife, as one of Mr. Hearst's journalistic handmaidens lived with Mrs. Hauptmann at Flemington, but the sentimental gush favoring the defendant which an adept journalist can turn out without going to such lengths is sufficiently familiar to require no description.

The point is that it is as much the desire of the defense as of the prosecution to try its case in the papers before it ever comes to trial in the courts. And after the trial is under way, the more successful the defense counsel in reducing public opinion to blubbering sentimentalism or cynical indifference, the more roseate his prospects for the future. The net result is that, although the defense is likely to wheedle the papers where the prosecution may try to put on pressure, the end both have in view is the same—publicity for the lawyer.

And the judges? Well, judges differ. But the number is few who do not have a vivid sense of the personal advantage to be gained from presiding at extensively reported trials. Veteran reporters and cameramen could tell amusing tales, if they wanted to, of the lengths to which judges will maneuver to see that the press pictures and the leads in the news stories are devoted to the wisdom of the bench rather than to defense counsel, prosecution, or even defendant.

This is the barest sketch of what lies behind the distortion of criminal procedure of which the press is undoubtedly guilty. It does not begin to make the situation out as bad as it really is. But it should be enough to make clear the basic fact, namely, that at every step in this anti-social process the press is bedeviled *by officers of law and courts* to do precisely what it does do.

III

They do these things better in England. I hesitate to say that, because there has been so much nonsense talked about the superiority of the English press and of English jurisprudence. But with respect to this particular matter, it is true that England is almost entirely free from abuses of the kind under consideration.

This is not to say that there is no vulgarity, no sensationalism, in the treatment of crime news by English papers. There is plenty; the public taste is continually titillated—and debauched—by crime stories which are printed with as much gory detail, and with as much "glorifying" of the criminal, as any printed in this country. If it is sensational crime news that the public wants, a large portion of the British press sees that its appetite is satisfied. But there is no hippodroming of trials. There is no trying of cases in advance in the newspapers. And there is no making the judicial process *as such* an adjunct in a feverish race for personal publicity.

When Mr. Stimson addressed the Attorney-General's conference he emphasized the difference between the time schedule for criminal procedure in England and in the United States. A sensational murder was committed in England, he recounted, as a party of American lawyers was leaving New York to hold joint sessions with the British bar in London. The criminal had been apprehended, indicted, and all preparations for his trial made by the time the Americans docked at Southampton on a Saturday. The trial was held the following Monday and Tuesday. Conviction came Tuesday afternoon. The appeal was heard by a court presided over by the Lord Chief Justice, and sentence confirmed, on Thursday. As the group started home at the end of the week, the guilty man was hanged.

There are few parallels to that sort of judicial speed in the United States, except in states like Michigan and Wisconsin, where the absence of the death penalty seems to have speeded up court procedure. But the point which Mr. Stimson was making was not that speed is desirable as an end in itself, but that it is desirable as a means toward making the more brazen forms of judicial hippodroming impossible. "So far as I can remember, there was absolutely no indication of drama either attempted or allowed. No sentimental life histories were published. No prison matrons or prosecutors were photographed with their arms around the prisoner's neck."

But there were a number of other things which did not appear in the English papers whose absence Mr. Stimson perhaps did not notice. Yet that absence was fully as important as speed in making it easier for the court to insure that justice was done. During the time in which the police were hunting for that criminal, the press was not filled with theories as to how the crime had been committed, and—unless the London Commissioner of Police or a chief constable asked for such publication—nothing was said as to whom the police "wanted," much less suspected. After the arrest, nothing was reported about it except the facts recorded on the official charge sheet. Up to the very end of the trial, nothing was said about the character of the accused or his previous record. Such a thing as comment

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by the lawyers on their own or their opponents' cases never crept into the columns. While the trial was in progress, all that was reported was what came out in the actual evidence,* and nothing was so much as hinted as to the bearing of this evidence on a final verdict, or as to the manner in which the evidence was given. In other words, all the methods by which the American press might take such a case and poison the mind of the public in advance of its trial, or submerge it in slobbering sentimentality or prejudice while the trial was in progress, were out.

Mr. Stimson, or any others who may be interested in this difference between the English and the American treatment of criminal cases, would do well to read a booklet, *Legal Headlights for Pressmen,* prepared for the British National Union of Journalists by Mr. G. F. L. Bridgman, that organization's "honorary standing counsel." There is a chapter in it with the exceedingly pointed title, "When Editors May Go to Gaol," and the main idea seems to be that an English editor can be sent to jail—or gaol, if you insist—for doing almost anything in reporting a criminal trial that an American editor would be likely to do as a matter of course. "The publication of matter which misrepresents the proceedings before the courts or prejudices the public for or against a party" is, according to Mr. Bridgman, an editor's jail ticket in England. But that isn't all: "Especially it should be noted that the comments on pending proceedings, which the parties or their solicitors are so fond of addressing to the press, if they prejudice the other side," will produce quick trouble if printed.

Here's how they do it in England.

A few years ago, when a man named Mahon was awaiting trial for the murder of a Miss Kaye, *The Manchester Guardian, The London Evening Standard,* and *The London Daily Express* stated that Mahon had been living under an assumed name, had given Miss Kaye presents which implied a coming marriage, and so on. Now, all these statements were true, and the inference which the papers were discreetly suggesting might be drawn from them was also true. But the statements were printed before Mahon had been tried, when their printing might conceivably have helped to prejudice the public mind against him. All it cost *The Guardian* and *The Express* was £300 apiece, and *The Standard* £1000, with a warning from the Lord Chief Justice that if the offense were repeated there would be a jail sentence. Incidentally, *The Standard's* extra fine resulted from its attempt to exhibit a bit of Americanesque newspaper enterprise by printing an exclusive advance interview with a person who was expected to be an important witness.

When a man named Rouse was arrested and tried for having committed murder according to a cheerful pattern drawn in a previous case—simulating accidental death by setting fire to a motor car in which the victim's body had been placed—*The London Evening Star* drew another fine from the Lord Chief Justice for having put out street posters (what the British call "contents bills") with the headline: "Another Blazing Car Murder." Since Rouse had not yet been convicted, Lord Hewart held it contempt to refer to the case as a "murder." This, notice, was not for anything that appeared in *The Star,* but for a phrase in a street advertisement!

When the so-called "man-woman," Colonel Barker, came up for trial, the newspapers did what they could to convey an air of mystery about the case, and dwelt with avidity on slips by a police officer in his actual testimony when he referred to the apparently male prisoner as "her." But beyond that the press dared not go. Until after the verdict, no English paper could mention the aspect of the case which, in America, would have been shrieked from the newspaper housetops—making impossible an impartial trial.

When a member of the Tottenham Hotspur football team was arrested on a minor charge, only two London papers took a chance—and that after the case had been concluded!—on mentioning the fact that the man accused played on that famous professional eleven. Imagine the American press, if a member of the New York Giants fell afoul the courts, suppressing reference to that fact lest the case be prejudiced!

What do examples such as these mean? They mean, to quote Mr. Bridgman again, that an English paper will be punished for criminal contempt if it publishes "words or acts obstructing, *or tending to obstruct* (his italics)—the distinction is important—the administration of justice. . . . Attacks on, or abuse of, a party; attacks on the personal character of witnesses or a discussion as to their demeanor in the witness-box or the likelihood or otherwise of their evidence being the truth; general comment on the subject-matter of a case . . . are examples which immediately leap to mind. . . . The publication, even without comment, of the contents of the writ, or the summons, or of the other pleadings, is a highly dangerous thing, and if the pleadings of one side are published without those of the other, it is a clear contempt. . . . The courts are rightly lenient toward the press, realizing that publicity does more public weal than woe; but they have declared over and over again that they will not tolerate what has got to be known as Trial by Newspaper, or unfairness to accused persons, which would never be allowed in a court of law."

IV

Now the fact to be noted about this difference between the English and American methods of keeping the work of the courts above reproach is that its cause lies almost wholly in the difference between the attitudes taken by the two benches. The evidence is convincing that much of the English press, and a considerable part of the bar, would be only too glad to give English trials the same ballyhoo treatment that has wrought such havoc in this country. But they dare not! This not because of any wide divergence between the laws controlling criminal procedure in the two countries, but simply because the precedents governing punishment for contempt of court have developed so differently. An English judge will, by citing for contempt, make short work of newspaper or lawyer whose activities tend in the slightest degree to bring the proceedings in his court into disrepute!

When I first started inquiring among

* There is a case on record in England in which a newspaper was fined because a reporter, in quoting from a letter used as evidence, quoted the entire letter, while only a part was actually introduced into the record of the trial.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

English "pressmen" about the reasons for the restraint displayed in reporting incompleted criminal actions, I had a vague notion that the stringency of the English libel laws was responsible. Libel possibilities undoubtedly keep British papers from printing some things that American newspapers would print. But when it comes to keeping the press from making carnival out of the work of police and courts, the libel laws have little to do with it. The controlling factor, the thing which preserves the majesty of the English law, is this readiness of judges to punish for contempt of court.

Judges in America, quite as much as in Great Britain, are in complete control of their own courts. They have certain precedents for contempt fairly well established. But such a precedent as the British adhere to, as a means of keeping the whole judicial process from public scorn, is still waiting to be built up over here. Why, if there is so much anxiety to re-establish the majesty of the law, not begin building? The first judges who resorted to this method for cleaning up criminal proceedings, applying it against both press and bar, would bring down on themselves the loud indignation of all the interests which think they are making money or gaining prestige under present conditions. But as the public came to understand what was involved, it would approve.

The time has come, said a committee of the American Bar Association, to "consider ways and means of preventing a repetition" of the disgraceful Flemington affair. This is the way in which the British bench effectively guards British justice against any such besmirching, and as soon as the American public grasped its effectiveness, I believe that it would favor resort to a similar method in this country. At any rate, it presents one way by which the disfigured countenance of the lady with the supposedly bandaged eyes can be quickly and improvingly lifted. It is up to the judges. Without any new legislation, but with a genuine determination to protect the dignity and impartiality of every trial over which they preside, the men on the bench can impose regulations of adequate effectiveness on papers, police, lawyers, and prosecuting officers, if they so desire. *If they so desire!*

A Patient Wants to Know

By Edna Yost

Why do doctors refuse to give their patients credit for having any sense?

Suppose you are a person of intelligence who has become miserable from some illness that is not yielding satisfactorily to medical diagnosis or treatment. Of what value will your intelligence be in helping you back to health? Will your physician welcome it as a potential asset to be used in helping him discover why his treatment is not being efficacious? Or will his attitude indicate, even if his words do not, that you will do wisely to put your layman intelligence into winter quarters during the period of your illness?

It seems to me that doctors are not yet grasping at the advantages of co-operation with the intelligence of their patients. Although they themselves admit that their practice lies in two realms, one of medical guesswork and the other of scientific certainty, they still prefer to assume the mantle of authority even when it is pure guesswork, demanding a blind, unintelligent faith and obedience that smacks of the Middle Ages. This was strikingly (and unexpectedly) brought home to me recently when I asked a doctor just what or who made the ideal patient.

"A sick baby," he answered. And then corrected himself. "No; a sick baby without a mother."

"But a sick baby," I objected, "cannot be of any help to you at all. It can't even tell you what or where its symptoms are."

"That's our job to find out," he said. "And don't forget—a sick baby doesn't imagine things about himself. Nor has he been handicapped by popular health talks over the radio with that 'little knowledge' which is a dangerous thing."

In the highly important task of recovery from illness, I am told in a recent issue of a medical journal, the "good patient" is one who is willing and able to return to the dependence of childhood when "we are nursed as infants in arms," with as much "confidence in one's physician as in one's confessor, one's husband or wife," satisfied to trust that all will be done for his best advantage.

Now I wonder if this attitude of infantile trust, even if it could be proved to be the best one, is possible among intelligent people any longer. I do not believe it is. The possibility of intelligent people being able to return to the dependence of childhood has been destroyed by doctors themselves by the eagerness with which they have grasped the tenets of the newer psychology at one end only—the end that provides them with an alibi for failure rather than with a weapon for success. "Nerves," "emotions," they can say now with a shrug of the shoulders when their own inefficiencies and stupidities fail to be of help. And they point to the newer psychology for verification of the power of the mind and emotions to cause illness.

Possibly women suffer more often than men from this willingness of doctors to shrug shoulders and do nothing but pass out pills with a superior condescension. I do not know. But I do know that it is next to impossible for a woman who happens not to be of the placid, bovine type to undergo any illness which fails to respond favorably to the doctor's first prescriptions without being handicapped at this point by the doctor's quick willingness to name some nervous and emotional condition rather than a primarily physical source as the more likely cause. Too many of us by far are having the experience of being treated as if we are suffering from nerves, complexes, and inhibitions when an X-ray of our gall bladder or some intelligent co-operation on dietary matters would be more to the point.

A friend of mine who for years has been in charge of the health of student nurses in one of our largest hospitals asserts that the most difficult part of her job has been to get doctors to see the nurses' problems as physical problems in the many, many cases when

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they actually are. Because of its emphasis on inhibitions, the newer psychology has enabled doctors to victimize women more often than men with half-baked, unassimilated psychological dicta. Whatever value the patient's intelligence may have in illness, it is far more likely to be used today if the patient is a man than if she is a woman.

I happen to be one of the women who have done their share of complaining in the last five years. After a long period of fatigue, particularly affecting the eyes, I got up one morning only to go down suddenly with one of those complete cessations that can be pronounced nervous breaks.

I was not as much better at the end of six months as the doctors said I should be, or even at the end of a year. And the fatigue affecting my eyes was very much worse. So was my opinion of myself. For it was obvious long before the year was up that several doctors were strongly of the opinion that, in spite of the severe toxic condition evident in my eyes, there were hidden psychological causes at the root of my inability to recover.

Being an unmarried female past her first youth I was a particularly promising stamping ground for psychological illness. For you know, of course, that the emotional life of the unmarried female is bound to be wrong. Either she has no sex life—and that's supposed to be very, very hard on her nervous system—or else she has it outside the sanction of law and society, and whether that is even worse for her—well, God alone knows!

Being, too (I insist!), an intelligent person, I knew there was the possibility that the doctors' insinuated suspicions about psychological causes were right. So I made it as easy as possible for them to be frank. They were. Did I realize a nervous break is very often an attempt to escape from some intolerable situation? Perhaps I was frightened about my work. Free-lance writing is a precarious occupation and maybe if I'd just give up my ambitions and take a job to assure me a definite income—though how I could have held one with my eyes as they were I knew no more than they did. Till finally, when my poor eyes insisted on rebelling more and more, wasn't I secretly in love with my oculist! For certainly I was creating an excellent excuse for more frequent contact with him.

I tried my best to co-operate. So much so that, under all the burdens placed upon me, I did things which seem to me now to be highly unintelligent. For instance, in at least three cases I took medicines that were making me even sicker than I already was. I took them even after I had been openly told once that "You were pretty sure ahead of time that the medicine wasn't going to be good for you, weren't you?" Time and again I used my intelligence to stifle my intelligence because of the tension that arose when I tried to use it in any way that did not fit the doctor's pattern. Till eventually, I pigeonholed so easily into the highly nervous type (as who would not have!) that I was at a tremendous disadvantage with any doctor who had not known me in my more normal days.

Then, after more than three years, I went to a third nose and throat specialist where I reported again a very definite physical symptom which had been either ignored or explained away as a nervous reaction symptom by two other specialists and several physicians. And without any warning something snapped inside of me as I described the symptom again.

"I'm bringing you a physical problem," I heard myself saying in a none-too-pleasant tone, "and I don't want a psychological evasion for an answer. I'm sick to death of being explained away as a nervous case. I know that line as well as you do, and if that's all you're going to have to offer, save your breath."

I suppose it is some indication of the size of the woman that she showed no resentment over either my words or my tone. Maybe she would have discovered the teaspoonful or two of cyst-encased poison in both my sinuses anyway. But the fact remains that until I took the stand of refusing absolutely to be treated as a psychological problem, a half dozen doctors whose abilities I have every reason to believe are high as such things are rated today were ready, in the face of indisputable physical facts, to grasp the tenets of the new psychology at the end that gave them the alibi and me the razzberry. And if only I had been able to afford a psychiatrist after two or three years of illness I suppose I might still be trying to remove the oculist from my head (if I were still attached to it) instead of the streptococci.

I have chosen to speak of my own experience because it is easier to speak of it without bitterness than, for instance, of two of my women friends who died of cancer in the last two years after months of being told to get off their tension, that they were letting their nerves tie them up in knots. Or of several others who seem more tragic to me than the doctors' buried mistakes—women of intelligence who have had neuroticism willed upon them by doctors.

For neuroticism is a logical result in a person of intelligence who attempts to co-operate with doctors by reverting to an adolescent attitude of dependence—if the doctor happens to be wrong too long and the illness to be of a non-fatal nature. Intelligence is a force that needs to be used if it is not to dam up within us disastrously. Under the oftentimes terrific handicaps of illness we are led into damning and damnable attitudes we would not think of accepting in health. Our judgment is impaired at the time when the need for judgment is greatest. And the greater our sensitiveness, the more readily we are created into the beings the doctor's attitude makes of us. Meanwhile, our physical condition may become progressively more critical.

The history of medicine informs me that in every age the patient has always been what prevailing medical opinion and its dominant technic have made of him. It is not chance and the strenuous pace of modern life alone that have made this an era of neurotics, an era when the increase in mental diseases is all but unbelievable.

I grant you that the question of whether doctors make enough use of the intelligence of their patients is one that still allows for a difference of opinion. The late Sara Haardt Mencken, for example, wrote not so long before she died, "I like to be treated as an intelligent adult when I am ill, not as a deranged unfortunate or as a little child seeking guidance through the wilderness. Most doctors within the range of my experience do appeal to the intelligence."

But it is evident that even Miss Haardt's encomium recognizes that the patient's intelligence is not always sought after. And, to get away from

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

opinion, I think available figures indicate the same fact. Disease statistics for the twentieth century show the very trend we might expect if, as many of us believe, doctors have been using their increased prestige (resulting from scientific advances that have enlarged the field of medical certainty) to make them more dogmatic about their guesswork, less eager to co-operate with the intelligence of the sick, than they are justified in being.

Instead of quoting the statistics directly let me quote what Doctor C. E. A. Winslow * says about them:

"Medical science has made advances during the last fifty years which have worked a revolution in the condition of human life. . . . The death rate has decreased to only three-fifths of what it was a half a century ago. Such a record might well lead to the conclusion that the business of medicine is going well. . . . Closer scrutiny, however, reveals certain serious defects in the balance sheet. The victories so far achieved have been won almost exclusively in one particular field, that of communicable diseases. . . . *When we pass to the field of medical practice rather than that of public health we find that diseases with which the physician and surgeon deal, such as heart disease and kidney disease and cancer, are on the increase. A vast new field, that of mental diseases and defects, is just beginning to reveal its disquieting magnitude.*" (Italics mine.)

I interpret these words of Doctor Winslow to mean that in the realm of medical guesswork, in contrast to that of medical certainty, doctors are not even holding their own. Actually they are losing ground. Surely there is significance in this contradictory twist to impersonal statistics which cannot be explained away glibly as due to the fact that we live longer and therefore have more diseases incident to old age. Rather, the statistics indicate what is bound to happen in an age when "the strength of our medicine lies in the fact that it does not build on the subjective factor but that it possesses more and more means for objective recognition." †

Now the patient's intelligence—lying within the subjective factor—undoubtedly has, with proper handling, a great deal to offer to medical knowledge in any particular case of illness, and in general. It is an indispensable part of an efficient approach to learning some of the things not yet in the doctors' books. As long as any guesswork is necessary, the sick man has some valuable clues to be sought after. And since the day is admittedly far distant when the human being is to prove scientifically reducible, medicine is going to depend partly on guesswork for some time. So when a doctor can remark disparagingly "You were pretty sure ahead of time that the medicine wasn't going to be good for you," *after the medicine had been wrong, undeniably,* something needs to be done about the doctor.

I venture that no one who reads this is without knowledge of some case of illness that failed to get better until after doctors had been dispensed with. Is it fair to pigeonhole all of these cases as of people whose dispositions and temperaments made it impossible for doctors to help them? I think it cannot be denied that a good percentage were of cases where some bit of knowledge that could have helped the sick was right under the doctors' noses —and they refused it—the very doctors who would not buy a medical book three years old on the grounds that medical practice moves and changes so rapidly.

I read an editorial in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* yesterday which lamented the fact that with all the progress of the past century "little has been accomplished in the improvement of health" of adults. And there flashed across my mind that old proverb about the Lord helping those who help themselves; and with it a fresh realization of how slow the medical world is in recognizing that adults must be taught to help themselves.

We must be taught! The old days of the magical halo over the physician's head are gone. Today the intelligent patient wants not to worship but to know. He wants to know about himself and how to help himself, believing that to be the intelligent way of approaching many of his health problems. He wants to do his part. And he expects his physician to be as able and willing as any other high-grade teacher to talk his language and guide him in assuming his proper responsibilities.

It need scarcely be mentioned that there are cases when no responsibility should be placed upon the patient; and that there are people who wish neither responsibility nor to use their intelligence whether in sickness or health. Also there are people who hug their illnesses and enjoy them as the normal person hugs health. Doctors cannot be expected to be teachers when their patients will have none of it.

But there are great numbers of people with health problems who will do everything in their power to put their intelligence to work. As adult *students* they will be able to achieve a constructive mental attitude through submission to the doctor's superior knowledge in a way that is impossible in adults who are supposed to become as infants in arms or dependent adolescents. As adult students they will realize that their own judgment—no matter how reliable ordinarily—is likely not to be as valid in sickness as in health; as intelligent adults who are not without some knowledge of psychology they will know that their apparently physical problems may often be psychological in origin; and the very fact that they have gone to a doctor proves that they will approach their problems believing that the doctor has something valuable to offer which they lack.

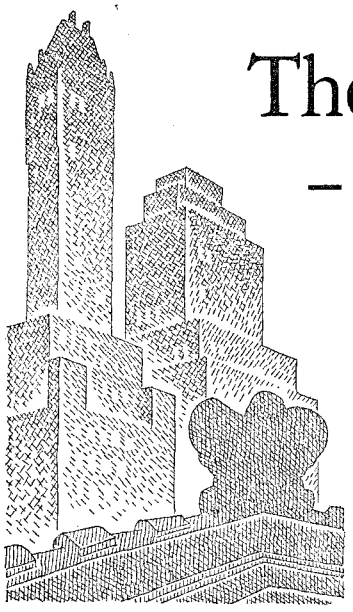
The advantages to medicine of this kind of co-operation are so obvious that it is hard for me to believe my eyes and ears and admit the great lack of it which exists today. Some steps, of course, are being taken. But facts and findings based on what doctors have been able to learn from the intelligence of their patients is still the same kind of news to the medical world as the man biting the dog in the journalistic world.

I sometimes wonder how, in their most honest moments, doctors expect us to feel about them, with what attitude they expect us to be able to approach them. I put the question fairly up to them. How can we respect a profession that is losing ground in the diseases with which we are afflicted if they won't help us use our intelligence for all it may be worth? How can we even be grateful to a profession that has helped us to live longer only to feel worse?

* *The Yale Review*, December, 1931.

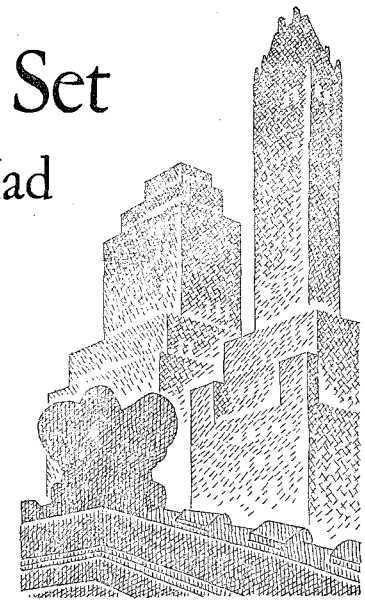
† From *Men and Medicine*, Doctor Henry E. Sigerist.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The Younger Social Set

– Or Why Mothers Go Mad



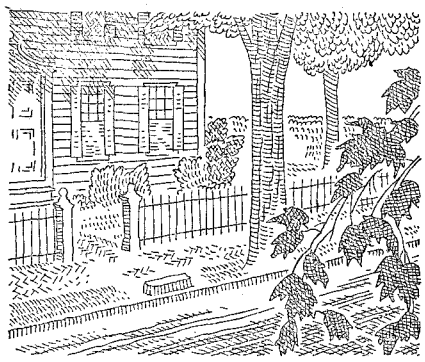
The holiday season offers a problem to parents of the prep-school age. In the first article a well-known society woman, who remains anonymous, compares her childhood's social activities with those of her daughter. The second article shows the scope of the problem and the reactions and comments of three hundred prep-school boys

I. New York Is Not a Home Town

I HAVE lived in New York for twenty years and I love the city, for all its stridency. Few things seem to me more beautiful than its clear sunsets behind mammoth buildings, its precisely engineered bridges and skyscrapers, or the heaped up fruits and vegetables in its markets. Also I have associations here that are wide and deep and I doubt if I could live happily anywhere else.

Yet now as my children are growing up I begin to turn a wistful eye toward the small up-state city where I was born and brought up. I am beginning to think that I was most fortunate to have been bred there and that if I had my choice I would carry my children back so that they might have its advantages too. And this is in spite of the fact that when I left, I hoped it would be never to return. Then, I thought my going away was an escape, a narrow and lucky one, and a splendid, if rather arrogant revolt from little interests, deadening monotony. But now I wonder.

Perhaps I am merely falling into the habitual parental weak state of mind and assuming that what experiences were mine in growing up should be those of my children. Perhaps my nostalgia is inducing the mirage of the



middle-aged, the glories of the familiar past. But whatever the sentimental fallacies may be, I am coming to suspect that New York is far too fascinating, too varied, for any one's good, and especially for the adolescent child; and that a small town, for all its educational disadvantages, is a safer haven for natural, purposeful development, and is far more fun to grow up in—really. And I hope, as a parent, I can make my point without bringing to the fore the patent fact that for the child the common cold is the scourge of the big city.

Not so long ago I revisited my native terrain, and all the old ladies and gentlemen whom I left marching toward the grave turned out to be miraculously my own age, and very much alive. Where I once saw only drab conformity to worn-out ideas, with never a quickened pulse over opinion or beauty, it now seems to me that these same people are unexpectedly up-to-date, sharply etched in character, salty with the flavor of their uniqueness. In fact, they seem to be discussing with less self-consciousness, more sincerity, and more individual humor all the current notions that make large or small talk for New Yorkers. And I cannot imagine why the place was once just another Main Street to me.

Of course, it is probable that obvious social changes have stimulated intelligent talk everywhere. When I was young, there had been no war, no revolution in Russia, no boom, no depression, no Fascism, no New Deal. Tolerance was bound to spread via these cataclysms. And now, neither the socialist nor the communist, if imprisoned on a lecture platform and buttoned safely in a dress-suit, is the hair-raising criminal he was once considered. Even a suffragette was a pretty odd creature in my day.

And at that time, also, there were no radios, no moving-pictures except the "Perils of Pauline," and the town was a tag-end tryout, offering an old opera house and a dead audience, so that the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

art of the drama could hardly flourish. I can remember no community orchestra for better or worse. But local musical talent is rife where all was silence in my day, save for the metronomic piano lessons. And every small boy or girl wants to "make" a band or an orchestra. Art exhibitions come through and are no more looked at than those on Fifty-Seventh Street, but still they come through, and the town boasts one of our best painters, who finds life both congenial and profitable. In short, the small town revisited proves that neither ideas nor the arts are as peculiar to New York as we are apt to suppose. And I need not keep my children here to gain contact with them.

But whether or not ideas and the arts are wisest or best in the small town, what grows there is at least indigenous. Whereas, in New York, so little is connected by growth, so little is indigenous or of common interest. New York is like one large buffet table from which each one picks his favorite *hors d'œuvre* and retires to his corner. The absence of neighbors and the continuous presence of strangers gives a terrifying impersonality to metropolitan life. My children are doomed never to have a home-town—which, in my present frame of mind, seems a pity.

It is my daughter, Sarah, aged fifteen, that suffers, quite unconsciously, the most. Certainly, like any healthy child, she ought to have plenty of spontaneous gaiety, growing out of daily association, as part of her education and happiness. But is she getting it, as I, for instance, had it?

In New York she goes to a girls' private school. In almost any other town she would probably attend a public co-educational high school. From the point of view of academic learning, she is far better off in New York, I admit. Because of the tuition price, her school here has the funds and the courage to experiment, to pay greater attention to special difficulties, to modify equipment to needs. It is not overcrowded, and there is an air of freedom, spaciousness, and some grace in the building itself. It was chosen for the child from among competing private schools because it seemed best suited to her personal bent. Sarah at the moment is getting a great deal from this school that she would not find in a public school anywhere. Yet I would be willing to sacrifice this wise education to the wider privileges the small town offers.

It must be remembered that I am talking about a family, middle class, with enough money to provide the best for their children's welfare either in New York or elsewhere. And I am talking of a family whose ambition extends toward the final happiness of the child—not toward a false goal of idleness, "position," or riches. The family budget of the middle and upper classes in New York must invariably include tuition for private grammar and high schools, as long as the public schools of the metropolis fall so woefully behind public schools in smaller cities in both methods and accommodation. But, even should Sarah brave the dangers of germs, dirt, and overcrowding in the public schools here, she would still be more than ever a stray. New York public schools would not mold her into a confident member of a homogeneous community.

Of course, it is true that all public schools, even in the small town, suffer the dead hand of poverty and state indifference. What quickening Sarah might feel from her studies would depend on her own mind, not on the stimulation of teacher or curriculum, with rare exception. But this might be to her good. She might pass the college board examinations but not as convincingly or easily as she stands to pass them after her present private school training. She would probably study French or any other language under an American, perhaps one who had never heard the language natively spoken. She would run the risk of reading Virgil with an elderly maiden, waiting at her desk for a pension, who had long ceased to thrill to the adventures of Æneas. Well, to be sure she runs this risk in any school. But the risk is greater in the small town where a teacher may be a fixture for three generations.

From the point of view of the child's social life, however, including association with the other sex, which is a large factor, the small-town school wins out decidedly. For, as a matter of course, there is co-education. The handful of private high schools in New York City that are co-educational approach normal life nearer, I think, than the others. But the more usual thing is for the boys to go to boarding school, at high-school age and before, leaving the girls in the majority even in the co-educational schools. In the smaller town, it is not so much the custom for either boys or girls to go to boarding school. High-school life for both sexes together is taken for granted, and separation doesn't occur until college years.

On the whole, therefore, parties in the small town are a natural outgrowth of daily association. The children form into groups, it is true, and one group is inclined to consider itself the superior and the chosen. As soon as that age of passionate party-going arrives, snobbery of a rather evil sort begins to rear its head, in both environments. But snobbery is a larger question that works through the adolescent fear of life unexplored. And it does not weigh the scales heavily in favor either of the small town or New York. Children are left out of dances and parties in a small town who should be asked, and children are left out in New York. The emotion of not belonging is a pitiful and sometimes tragic one, and for the sensitive child anywhere it is almost impossible to escape. But I am not just now talking of the Alice Adamses.

In small cities, the children themselves manage most of their own dances. And I believe they detect the folly of their snobbery earlier in life because they have had opportunity to know, through the school, more types of children. Pressure from an ambitious mother is thoroughly resented. Nor do amusements consist only of the formal evening affair, for there are picnics, spring and winter, and all the games, tennis, swimming, skating, golf, in which the sexes share. The child, at the age when both a light and glowing romance and the stimulation of festivities are essential to her happiness, finds them normally at hand.

The inevitable worry and speculation on the part of the parent as to whether so-and-so is a nice girl or a nice boy, exists. But "nice" is perhaps less synonymous with smart. In the more compact environment, rich and poor alike are equally a part of community life, so that class distinction, though present, is not entirely a basis for judgment. Facts of character count and selection is made on more rational grounds.

But now here in New York my young Sarah comes to the romantic age,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and where do I turn to find her young men and a holiday whirl in the big city?

It is a most far-fetched and ridiculous performance. I learn that there are certain subscription dances. I must get two or three or four of my friends to write two or three or four of their friends who are patronesses of these various parties. That fairly automatic operation complete, the letters are filed in an office of the secretary and the child's name enrolled for a vote at a meeting of the patronesses. But so thirsty are the poor children for dances and so eager the fond parent to provide the opportunity, that far more names pour in than can possibly be accommodated, unless one hire an armory. But suppose one did hire an armory, the young people, most of whom have never met, could not be introduced, nor the wall-flower protected. The selected girls finally form the nucleus of these dances and the boys are later invited more indiscriminately. The business of getting to a dance is the task of the girl's parent only.

Even when the name is enrolled through the letter-writing, the battle is far from won. It now becomes the duty of the parent to take care that a majority of the patronesses actually meet her child before the voting takes place. Perhaps so-and-so will arrange a tea for Sarah to meet a patroness or two, or perhaps the mother can bring the child to call.

At this juncture the parent feels those difficult emotions connected with putting so much effort in getting one's daughter invited, in asking to be asked. But for the child's sake, still languishing for her share of amusement, the mother swallows her old-fashioned attitudes and drives ahead very much as if she were a stranger in a new city. It is a year's extra-curricular work for the parent and a most disagreeable job for the patronesses who are kind women, hating to bar out any one with some claim on their friendship—often a very distant one at best.

And then, after this year of mild intrigue and polite wire-pulling, the dances take place. They have sprung from no spontaneity, nor grown naturally out of acquaintance or companionship, but are speckled with youthful strangers who will not meet again until the next holidays and then at a similar function. These neatly arranged dances for children smell a bit of the lamp; they have been too long in preparation, and the children themselves are aware of the efforts involved—clumsy efforts to provide dubious fun for nice boys and girls in a sprawling city. I recognize that they are not an effort on the part of mothers to impel their daughters toward rich marriages, as is so often supposed. And, embarrassed as I am by the methods necessary to give a healthy, attractive child of the female gender the good time her romantic age demands, I see no other way, and I still have to admit that some of the machinery of selection which now exists is necessary.

Can one wonder that a sigh escapes for the small town and that the big city weighs heavily on the spirit? For, having been taken in final victory to these dances, the children begin to assert themselves by wanting to go on somewhere else. And the hard-working mother, having achieved a place in the social sun for her daughter, is likely to receive a telephone call around eleven o'clock asking permission to visit a night club, which at least has the merit that the guests attend through their own initiative. The glitter of adult night-life, as yet untasted and therefore infinitely desirable, lies too temptingly at hand for Sarah.

Here again, as in the schools, is too much richness of choice. In a smaller town only one or two wicked dives offer competition and the child's family can more easily follow the trail when alarmed. Also, the spontaneous group affairs of the small town have in themselves a more satisfying good so that defection to night-clubs is neither smart nor necessary.

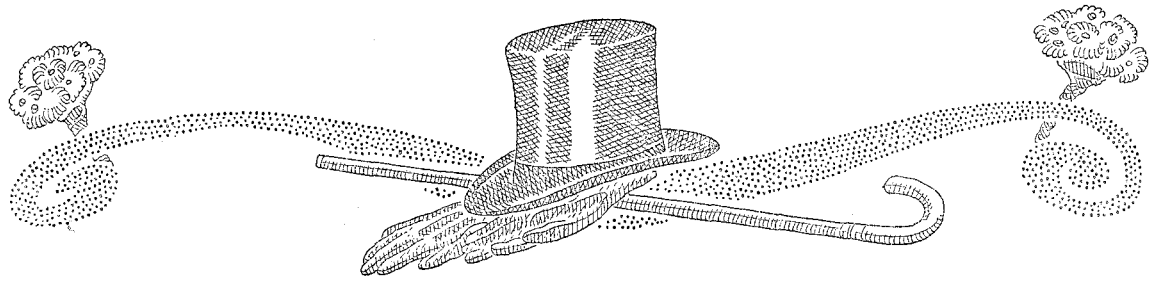
Nor, as I see it, do parties for children differ very radically from New York parties for the grown-ups. The collective interests which the small town nourishes give a truer background to any social function. But here there are too few collective interests to give point to evening gatherings.

For even though born in New York, we are none of us shareholders in a *group* life. What happens civically is hardly our responsibility, but the responsibility of Tammany or the Charity Organization Society or some vast overlordship that prevents local decency from being a personal care. Our amusements are designed to please the transients as much as ourselves. Our lecturers belong to this or that group of advocates, but fail to amalgamate us in any given direction. There is mystifying choice in everything. The salt and flavor of the individual evaporates in rapid, untasted contacts, whereas the everyday neighbors in a small town provide studies in character and inspire active sympathy. Infinite variety is momentarily gratifying to our wishes, but bad for our collective drive. Democratic theories may be more tolerated in New York but the democratic life, reaching toward human understanding, is far less possible than in the small town. And so life is broken into separate pieces out of which no whole can be made. Often the child senses this and a deadlier boredom than any found in the small town lies behind his cry: "What shall I do now?"

I harbor the fear, too, that the child brought up in New York may be satiated before ambition can take hold. The very longing to get out from under the elm trees lining the quiet streets of the smaller place, and the longing to see beyond, is something positive. But where can a young person go on from New York? How could my children, even now, attuned to this quick rhythm, habituated to so many experiences, be content with the limited pursuits of the small town? It would be dull to them though Robin Adair were present. They would be impatient for sparkle and sophistication, for the luxury of the shops, the richness of the hotels, and the wide choice among people.

To the advantage I had of growing up in a self-contained community outside New York, was the added thrill of moving to New York; and, today, added to that, a return now and then toward my roots, a re-tasting of a sweet flavor I was too young to know fully at the time. But for those of my generation who were brought up in New York, where are the old habits and places? Gone with the horse cars, the trees along the streets, the houses supplanted by apartments and lofts. Nothing of it remains except a few scattered individuals, pursuing quite different lives, and not smelling of the old earth any more. When my children are grown, I wonder, will they be able to say: "These are the friends I used to know; this was where we lived; this was my school; here is where our crowd played"?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



II. Ordeal by the Dance

By Inis Weed Jones

Holiday dances and the stag-line are a source of much harassed comment by parents at this season. Three hundred prep-school boys were asked why they behave as they do at dances and what they would do about it if anything. Here are their replies as well as a view of the whole social problem

THE scene is almost any metropolitan ballroom at which a polite holiday dance is being given for the very young. It may be either for those of sub-debutante age, or for their juniors —girls of thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen—the boys a little older.

"Those present" are the patronesses, a hard-working social secretary, one hundred girls and two hundred or more boys. Most of the children come from private schools and do not yet know each other. They are supposed to be introduced by a floor committee of their youthful contemporaries.

Half of the boys are massed in the inevitable stag line from which they keep darting forth to "cut in" on couples in the colorful moving wheel of the dance. *It all looks very gay indeed but it masks emotions that we were never wont to associate with the dance.* Boys watch like hawks to see whether other boys cut in on a girl before they take a chance. The fear of getting "stuck," of having to dance on and on with one girl—perhaps until the orchestra folds up and goes home—makes safety govern choice. Hence most boys strive to break in on the 25 per cent of girls who are getting such a "rush" they cannot move more than ten feet without a cut-in.

This leaves three-quarters of the girls, dancing or otherwise, strained and anxious, some acutely wretched. To be broken in on once around the room is the safety standard for girls. If a couple go three times around without being "broken" both begin to fear they are stuck. One boy describes his sensations:

> Again and again we circle the dance floor. We try to make conversation. Privately we are both miserable and embarrassed by the certainty that we are stuck. The talk lags, stops. Time passes. As we dance on and on each prays for help. Beads of moisture on her forehead. My collar begins to wilt. I keep flashing agonized glances at the stag line hoping against hope that some generous male seeing a companion in distress will let his nobler instincts come to the fore and relieve me of this really nice girl who in my desperation is rapidly coming to seem like a monster. But we have passed the stag line too often. After a quick glance they shift their gaze to other spots in the room where the most popular girls are enjoying a rush.

No friend cares to assume his difficulty, and committeemen find it hard to persuade a stag to sacrifice himself. No popular girl will risk her own good time by introducing her partners to a "dud"—even though off the dance floor the "dud" is her best friend. Boys who would honestly like to cut in are afraid to do so. In the coming-out years, girls excuse themselves and go home rather than be thus advertised: but most of these younger girls when stuck dance helplessly on and on in an agony of despair. Whether their plight be due to natural ineptitude, to shyness, or—as often happens—to want of sufficient introductions, the net result is the same. They are avoided like a plague.

Social ostracism, hard to bear at any age, makes its most cruel and embittering impression in the adolescent years. I used the phrase, "agony of despair." It sounds ridiculous when applied to feelings arising from a purely social function, but I assure you I use it advisedly. In cities with no community good times, these large organized dances are the only common meeting ground for boys and girls. The natural longing to know and be liked by numbers of boys can be realized *only* through success under these unfair conditions. No wonder they strive to stand out like motion-picture stars while they are many of them still far from their "charming age." No wonder the many who have a bad time of it envision the future in the starkest terms, no romance, no wedding bells. No wonder many of them get an overwhelming sense of inferiority, and that others get envious, sour, and bitter. If this be joyous youth, then welcome decrepitude!

As for the boys, invited everywhere and subjected to a system that places a penalty on courtesy, many of them reach a point where they seem to feel that nothing is required of them save a dinner jacket and their valued presence. We know what's wrong with this scheme from the girls' point of view and that of protesting parents. But is anything amiss from the boys' point of view? Much, it seems.

Some 300 preparatory-school boys from coast to coast were asked why they behave as they do at dances and what their suggestions were—if any—for making the scheme work better. Most of the boys smart under the epithets hurled at them—"selfish," "irresponsible," "utterly spoiled"—even when true. The majority hate being driven to a policy that puts them at odds with their conscience. Furthermore, they do not believe that courtesy can be restored until the system is so changed as to give them "a break" when stuck.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Meanwhile we have the unwritten safety code of those who have become hardboiled:

1. Never take a chance with a girl who is stuck—except under compulsion.

Note—When a hostess or a patroness says, "Wouldn't you like to meet a charming girl?" *ten to one* she's a "pill." But appeals from this source may not be denied. Resign yourself.

Note—Requests to cut in on a couple who are stuck when made by the floor committee may be denied unless they promise to relieve you and are known to be conscientious.

2. When in the stag line keep an eye out for committee men (distinguished by their white boutonnière), also patronesses or the social secretary who is managing the dance. They are expert at stalking the unwary. Duck before it is too late.

3. Never cut in on any girl until you have observed for yourself whether others are cutting in on this damsel.

Note—This is absolutely essential when in a strange crowd.

Note—Never be misled by beauty. It is no guarantee of popularity.

4. Even when a friend asks to introduce you to "an attractive girl" refuse to dance with her unless he agrees to cut in. Even friends sometimes let their sympathy get the better of their judgment.

Note—Avoid introducing a friend to a poor risk unless prepared to save him. Failure to do so does not improve friendship.

5. The maximum pleasure may be achieved by cutting in only on girls who get a rush, and by avoiding all adults and committee men.

6. If you do get stuck don't advertise the fact by looking sour. Put up a front. Be gay—a tough job. Few are equal to this stunt, but it's worth the effort. It might win a cut-in.

7. Duty dances are the rocks in the course of pleasure on which many a gallant ship has foundered.

Under "duty" dances come all social obligations, cutting in on daughters of family friends—"all right but not exciting," "no Venuses to be sure, but rating at least one cut," the girl at whose house you dined before the dance—often a "dud," and the other girls at the dinner—"often good," and those to be rescued at the behest of patronesses and committee men. All are agreed that a few "duty" cuts are axiomatic, but practice varies with all save the most ruthless. A minority state that they are able to come up to their quota with safety. "No boy goes into a dance with a wallflower type without having paved his way out in advance," writes one. "Anyway you ought to be willing to dance with a lousy babe once," writes another frankly. "Boys have to learn that they must get stuck sometimes if they are to be decent guests and desirable fellows," states one who attends most of the holiday dances in N. Y. but has preserved his courtesy. At the other extreme come remarks like this: "I seldom get stuck on duty dances because I make it a point to keep out of harm's way." "As between getting stuck on duty dances and being rude I prefer to be rude." "This is indeed," remarks one thoughtful lad, "a fine way to bring up one's children!"

Some would like to be courteous, to "rescue the perishing," but, what price salvation? Let them tell you:

As things are now the considerate boys are stuck most of the evening. Only a pure martyr could enjoy it.

Often you actually want to dance with a girl but are scared off by the thought of spending the rest of the evening.

I feel dreadfully for the girl if we're stuck long, but, even so, I cannot help going into a heavy fog. I feel dull and anxious. And everything we try to talk about seems to die on the vine.

If you're stuck long some girls dance as if they were frozen. You have to feel easy and happy to dance well.

First of all, when you are stuck you feel your evening is ruined. Your trouble is just the reverse of the old song, "Nobody knows the trouble I's got. Nobody knows but Jesus." Everybody *does* know, and everybody's playing safe.

A minority express sympathy for the girl:

When stuck all my wits desert me. A smile freezes on my face. But I do *try* to talk because I know the girl must feel terribly.

The opposite pole is expressed in the following hard-boiled opinion:

No, I don't suppose I'm as courteous as I should be, but you don't care much when it's girls you're likely to get stuck with *because they don't notice*. (Italics mine.)

One boy recounts the progress of his distress as he gets hopelessly stuck.

With my cheek soaked with perspiration gathered from the adjoining cheek of a stout, vigorously healthy young female and with the lovely thing's bushy hair buried in my right eye, and with my shoulder sagging from the support of a goodly portion of her 145 pounds for the last hour and a half, I finally navigated towards the edge of the ballroom floor. It is a difficult task for any pilot to take his ship away from the course without a few casualties. Either my charge gets rammed in the spinal column or somebody's inconsiderate elbow grazes my teeth. However, that's all in the night's work at a polite New York dance. I finally steered my charge back to the outstretched arms of an inviting chair.

Most readers, of course, will appreciate that, though he paused to rest, his duty was in no wise at an end until relieved by a friend or a committee man—a most uncertain prospect. He continues:

As I sat down beside that scented mound of melting butter, a perpetual smile on my bored features, I thought to myself, "These dances are a farce!" I'd rather go to a dance hall (maternal horror if known), for there at least you can go more than two steps with a good dancer and are never hung up with a pill.

Why (he asks) can't these "problem girls" go to Lake Placid and learn to ski? They might have hidden talent for that. They certainly have none for this kind of pleasure. . . . If the present method of dancing continues, the young men of New York ought to make up a pool and send all these unfortunate girls up there from November until April. Then all concerned would have a good time.

After varying amounts of this joyless duress at dances eagerly anticipated for weeks, boys suddenly make much the same discovery as that of the boy who writes:

This night I planned to pick only girls who got a rush. I did, and sure enough I had a swell time. It took me quite a while to find out that the boys who think themselves heroes because they help out girls who are having tough luck are just poor "suckers" who ruin their own good time.

Thus is gradually achieved the wily caution, the goatish stubbornness that characterizes the behavior of boys at large metropolitan dances.

What is the defense of the committee men who get blamed for most of this grief? They refer to their responsibility as "a thankless and hopeless task":

It requires the endurance of a Nurmi, and the generalship of a Napoleon.

It is the hardest kind of recruiting. If you're conscientious you must get B to relieve A, C to help B, and D to save C and so on. And when you consider how many girls know only a few boys!

There are various signs that a change is due in the dance scheme. Some boys feel that the sluggish stags who come just "to have a friendly jaw together" and to dance with only two or three girls should be sent home. Others are equally resentful of coercion, especially by adults:

I will not pay $15 to be forced to spend my evening dancing with a pill.

I was approached by an autocratic social secretary who flatly informed me that I'd dance with whom she said. I did—and left the dance. I shall never go to another subscription dance. I know others who feel the same.

Strange as it may seem, some boys—though they loathe getting stuck—are satisfied with the scheme "as is." They

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are mostly boys from smaller places where there is group spirit and they help each other out of "spots," or else those who have espoused the hard-boiled safety code. The majority would like to have the scheme so modified that they could have a good time and still be as considerate as they would like to be. Boys are also as one in affirming that the best time is to be had at dances of forty to eighty where most of the guests know each other.

The card dance gave way to the present technic because it did not afford a sufficiently wide and rapid exchange of partners to fit in either with the tempo of American life or the Roman size of modern parties. This size is the social reflection of a mass production age, swift transportation, great social emulation, and the increasing difficulty of giving dances in apartment buildings. The minute you engage a ballroom the cost necessitates a wide subscription list.

Few boys desire to return to the slower tempo of the straight card dances, but great numbers of them do advocate a scheme that involves the best of the old and the new, *i.e.*, card dances with the cut-in privilege after three to five minutes. As a matter of fact, this is already being done in several large cities, and boys who attend agree that this does the trick through annihilating the fear of getting hopelessly stuck. Thus it restores courtesy yet preserves the fluidity of the present technic.

There is one set of dinner dances for New York juniors whose sponsors decided the only way to break down the present dance scheme was to begin with the very young. They have done away with continuous music and greatly abbreviated the stag line. They have short dances with the cut-in privilege and there is a larger and somewhat older floor committee that does a great deal of introducing. Unlike sets which are subscribed to only for daughters and to which boys are invited only as guests, membership is also required for boys and with the understanding that if they do not do their part membership ceases. A minute and a half after each dance starts every girl is on the floor. In innumerable responses this particular set of dances is mentioned by New York boys as the one at which they have most fun. They have no small basis of comparison since the exigencies of providing boys in a two-to-one ratio are such that they are invited everywhere. (One of these preparatory-school boys has a high of twenty holiday dances in fourteen evenings.) Their collective enthusiasm for this type of dance seems to me indicative.

Just how long social custom will continue to train this group of youths to the selfishness that results from the present dance scheme remains to be seen. Most of the boys feel that something should be done about the matter. As one boy wrote, "I like to go home from a dance feeling that I have been courteous, but if I have a good time, I seldom can."

GARDEN PEACE

By Nancy Cardozo

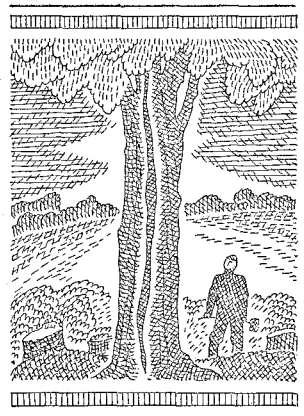
Above my daisied sward they fly,
The gray geese stretched against the evening sky,
And leave their silken shadows in the grass,
When they pass.

Now in my greening sward I find
Bachelors' buttons martial lined
Along the wall,
And the last year's wind-fall
Of pears and the rank apple of the thorn
Curdling the milky morn.
But above this and passing sweet
I find the smell of grasses at my feet:
Basil-thyme and bergamot,
Frost-lace of the wild carrot,
Vervain, blue, and moschatel,
Saint John's wort, green-dragon bell,
Mortal, hairy, rooted things,
Mournsome names of antique kings,
All forgot,
Basil-thyme and bergamot.

For most things are forgot
In this color-seasoned spot;
Daylight and the dark go by
Even as geese—wind patterns on the sky.
There is a limit; sky has an end
I know. . . . I bend
Over my herbs, honey-lipped,
In gardens where the days have dipped
Even as the wild geese come.
The bitter apple and the plum,
The smell of herbs are peace to me;
Here is no need for prophecy
Other than patterned wings above
Of pity or of love.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AFTER HOURS



Our recreations are often a fortress against a world too much with us. We can't spend all our time being economic animals or considering the wrongs of the world. Here is what some of our readers do to get fun out of life. Contributions should be addressed to After Hours Department. Articles selected will be paid for

LAVENDER AND OLD ADS

By Ray Giles

Life is never dull for Mr. Giles. From witchcraft at the age of ten, to the study of old ads in the present, he has never been without a hobby. They're practically his life work now and "Turn Your Imagination into Money" and "Here Comes the Band" (to be published in January) are two books that hobbies have led him to writing. Start with a hobby and end with a career!

Some hobbies are born with us; some are laboriously acquired; but some are fairly thrust on us. The oddest hobby I have ever ridden came unexpectedly upon me; it was the collecting of old advertisements. We had rented an island for our summer vacation. The hobbies I planned to follow were painting with water colors and swimming. But although I swam twice a day and painted every morning, this new hobby came along to eclipse the other two.

In our cottage was a bookcase stuffed with old magazines of the eighties and nineties, and one day when it was too dark and rainy to swim or paint I opened some of them. The editorial contents were interesting enough, including as they did plans for a five-day boat to Europe in the year of 1891, and several discussions about the possibilities of flying machines. But it was the advertising sections that stirred me up. In them I got a peep of the living habits of that golden period.

For example—the bustle. I had seen bustles before in illustrations and fashion plates, but they were always heavily covered with skirts. What was mother's bustle like as it dozed naked on her bedroom chair after she fell asleep? What was her bustle made of? How much did it cost? Were there problems in wearing it? Only old advertising can answer these questions, and for the most part the ancient ads have been burned up or were thrown away when the magazines were bound in volumes. A bustle manufacturer of 1887 tells us that he makes his "of blue tempered watch-spring steel." The reason is mighty good: "They yield to the slightest pressure, yet immediately return to their proper shape after the severest usage." An especially choice bit of Americana is the statement: "Wearers are never mortified by having these bustles crushed or bent into ridiculous shapes. This means a great deal to sensitive ladies who desire to rise, in a car or church, without that furtive attempt at rearrangement which is so often disagreeably noticed." Bustles came in many styles. There were single-, double-, and triple-deckers. There was the "Langtry" bustle "so arranged with coil springs as to fold up when sitting or lying down, the bustle resuming its proper shape upon rising." Bustles cost from a quarter to seventy-five cents.

The bustle makers also manufactured a "braided wire dress form" consisting of two deceptive hemispheres to be affixed to the chest for the figure "where nature has been unkind"; thus a full figure in front as well as in the rear was assured. And there were "wire hair rolls" to place under the pompadour and make it bulge, the high-pressure selling talk being, "By holding the hair out loose from the head your hair will not get musty or gather dampness from perspiration."

In old photographs I had seen Aunt Mattie in her comical non-revealing bathing suit, but I never knew why she was so well bundled up. An advertisement of 1891 told me: "Full Tights from waist to feet, fitting so close as to retain not a drop of water, so that the wearer is warm, comfortable, and comparatively dry, while other bathers are chilled through with wet clothes." In the same year Rogers Peet advertised a woman's bathing suit with a life preserver built right into the bosom. A Bailey's swimming glove was advertised into which you poked your fingers and spread them. Rubber webbing was between the fingers, the glove being "designed like a duck's foot" to "double the power of your stroke."

The editors illustrated few of the intimate facts about life of that time, so only from advertisements can we learn that ladies used special rubber massagers "to plump up the arms," chamois face masks to remove wrinkles, inflatable rubber busts, and "magnetic" corsets. In advertising we witness the evolution of the bathroom. Around 1887 there was an ubiquitous little ad which pictured a tandem canvas bathtub with a gentleman in one section and a lady in the other. Both were entirely unclad, but as the lady sat behind the gentleman and as he faced the same way that she did, the gentleman saw nothing at all and the lady saw only the gentleman's back. The whole affair needed only three chairs to support it. The text says: "Full, Sitz, &c., in one. Vapor and water, fresh, salt, mineral. Many thousands in use. Old Baths Renewed." By 1891, bathtub advertising claimed that, "The porcelain-lined tub is the coming thing. There are ten going into use where one was used five years ago." But the prize tub in my collection is the Mosely Folding Bathtub of 1894. It looked like the folding beds of that year except that when you lowered the front you found a bathtub where the bed ought to be. It was, "Portable, with self-heating arrangements to heat water at a moment's

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

notice. A great convenience, and an ornament to any room. Plate mirror front."

A great moment in my career as advertising archeologist came when I found my first twin bed advertisement. It is dated 1893 and shows ornate brass twin beds. The text announces that "our English cousins" are now sleeping in separate beds, and that the practice is very hygienic. Then an admonition in heavy capitals: "*Never Breathe the Breath of Another.*"

Yesterday's problems in everyday living parade before us in the old advertisements. One advertiser tells "how to get rid of carpet bugs"; another offers "fireproof lace curtains—absolutely non-inflamable"; still another features a bird cage from which no dog, cat, or rat can remove the canary, nor can the canary escape and fly out the window. Beside the picture of a man being dragged in helpless agony by a runaway horse is advertised a patented spur which instantly frees the foot if the rider is thrown. The conical lemon squeezer we know was introduced around 1890, and it is graphically contrasted with its predecessor, a square wooden device with two handles which, when pressed, shot most of the juice in the air.

No one need be old to remember the wheezy parlor organ, but I doubt if many of us can understand today the language used in an advertisement for such an organ in SCRIBNER'S of March, 1889. Some of the talking points for this $62.50 home organ were: "Stops: Bourdon, Manual, Sub-Bass, Diapason, Viol di Gamba, Melodia, Coupler Harmonique, Vox Humana, French Horn, Echo, Dulciana, Clarionet, Vox Celeste, and Orchestral Forte. Mezzo Knee Swell, Maestoso, Percussion, 111 Golden Tongue Reeds." As no explanation is offered of these resounding words I can only conclude that they were everyday language at the time.

For several months before Christmas dozens of pages of advertising appeared for souvenir spoons. In many homes a few of these monstrosities may still be found, but for a panoramic history of the craze at its height we must dig out old advertisements. Souvenir spoons cost from a dollar to five, though the only spoon which seemed to command the top price was one which had General Sherman on its handle. One manufacturer advertised "over 300 styles," an inkling of what you let yourself in for when you took up this hobby of yesterday. There were many types of handles and bowls, but the most popular seemed to carry likenesses of famous people: Miles Standish, Rip van Winkle, Mary Baker Eddy, General Grant, Molly Pitcher, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Hiawatha. In May of 1891, a Whittier spoon appeared with this endorsement: "I am greatly pleased with the spoon. It is admirably done: and I heartily thank thee for the gift. John Greenleaf Whittier."

The testimonial advertisements of today do not in any way surpass those of the nineties; indeed in some respects the old surpassed the new. Among the prominent testifiers for soaps, porous plasters, and perfumes were Russell Sage, Lillian Russell, Lily Langtry, Mrs. Grover Cleveland, Henry Ward Beecher, Stanley of Darkest Africa. Some years later a host of Congressmen endorsed Peruna.

A prize section of my advertising collection is the buggy department, especially the feathery phaetons and surreys designed for fast driving. A favorite selling point was, "Free from horse motion."

But there; I can only hint at the delights of collecting old advertisements. While they raise laughter whenever I show them, I am convinced that they have permanent value, for they tell of America's yesterday many facts which are not to be found elsewhere.

COLLECTING HOBBYISTS

By JENNIE SMALL OWEN

Newspaper work and writing up other people's hobbies in Kansas, her home state, got Miss Owen started on her own.

In the fifteen years I have been reporting for country town newspapers in a Midwestern state, I have unearthed more human interest copy "after hours" than I have "on the boss's time." For it is "after hours" that I look up the folk who do something besides make a living and fit into the social scheme.

They are alert and informed. They have something to tell and something to show. They open my eyes to the fact that "the world is full of a number of things."

Mrs. William Allen White, of Emporia, Kans., collects old china of the Tea Rose pattern which was her mother's favorite. She also collects colored table glass and her dining-room windows were a glow of color years before the old-glass craze struck the Middle West.

Mrs. Alfred M. Landon, wife of the governor of Kansas, has the largest collection of Westward Ho! glass in the State. She also collects Sheffield plate, Bennington pottery, and old luster.

Mrs. Mary Hoover, supervisor of nurses in the Topeka (Kans.) public schools, has in the past ten years collected nearly 900 pieces of majolica, one of the largest collections of the pottery in the world.

Mrs. Francis B. Odell, another Topeka woman, resolved twenty-five years ago to educate herself in art. She has made a comprehensive study of American illustrators and their illustrations through the medium of the popular magazines. Her collection of magazine prints traces the evolution of the art in America from its beginnings in the early sixties and represents more than 700 artists.

Mrs. A. C. Spain, of El Dorado, Kans., had 1730 pitchers in her collection when I interviewed her more than two years ago. The pitchers have been brought to her by friends from every country in the world.

Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Bittman, of Wamego, Kans., have been collecting candlesticks for thirty years and have more than a hundred pairs. Mrs. M. A. Wolf, of Ottawa, Kans., collects old table glass, millefiori paperweights and old luster and won first places with her collections at the Kansas State Fair this year.

John Arthur, Topeka, has been collecting Indian flints for fifty-five years. He has 10,000 flints and a large library of Amerindian lore. D. J. Kelly collects pipes and has 250 of them, ranging from the Missouri corncob to the Persian Narghiel. "After hours" he smokes them, taking keen pleasure in selecting the pipe he shall smoke each day. Doctor Arthur Gray makes marionettes, and from his hobby has grown a course at Washburn College. The Reverend Chas. L. Atkins, of the First Congregational Church, Topeka, collects and studies hymnals.

But there is time for no more bows.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I wish I could introduce each member of several congenial families I have met "after hours." In two instances, I know of father, mother, son, and daughter who are collecting glass, each having his and her own pattern. I know another family who restored the mother's girlhood farm home, just as nearly as it had been in the nineties. There the entire family spend holidays and week-ends living "like mother did."

I wish I could tell you of the collections of cup plates I have seen and the American history I have brushed up on in order to write of them intelligently. There is the collection of anecdotal material with which a teacher of ancient history enlivens her classes. And last, but not least, is the collection of Kansas native woods, 86 varieties to date, which the collector hopes to increase to 105, the number of counties in the State. The wood is to be made into a table with the Kansas seal inlaid.

And now with the deadline confronting me, I come to my own gentle hobbies. Aside from hobbyists I collect old words and old sayings. Whenever I find in my reading an expression my Scotch-Irish mother, my Hoosier stepmother, my Kentucky-Missouri father or the Norwegian hired girl used to use, I make a note of it. I have even found some of my father's old slang in Shakespeare. And now I am collecting jingles found in newspaper columns. Jingles which ring of contemporary events. Some day I shall have a jingling jeremiad of these jeopardous days.

RECORDER OF FOLK TALES

By Robert Price

Robert Price, collector of legends, has a couple of college degrees and has taught everything from country school rudiments to university English, yet still prefers to study and live in the little village about which his hobby centers—Alexandria, Ohio. Perhaps ghosts haunt your village streets, too, and will bear tracking down.

Most of our sagas have never been written down, and today they are not even being told. We don't have time to listen. Down to within the past two decades we heard them around the winter fire or in the dusk of the front porch on summer evenings—narratives about past people and their doings, which somehow gave flesh and blood and soul to the dry bones of local history we had learned from the chroniclers. The details were often trivial, often coarse and exaggerated, but sometimes pathetic, exciting, even momentous, and always intensely human.

Ask the neighborhood youngsters today how many of them know about the wagonload of pumpkins which paid the postage on a letter, or about the smallpox epidemic traced to an old suit of clothes which a squirrel hunter found in a hollow tree, or about the whippoorwill's call that guided a refugee slave to freedom, or about the Higgins brothers who lived alone together in the same cabin for twenty years without speaking to each other, or about Henry Oldham's pet blacksnake, or about the horse thieves of '72. The young folks' lack of information isn't due to a dearth of interest. The charm of things olden is just as great as ever. It's the modern schedule of living which is eliminating our heritage of community tales and traditions.

So I'm writing them down.

It is the hunt, though, that takes most of the off hours. Swapping yarns with the old-timers, ransacking dusty garrets, and deciphering pioneer diaries, account books, and correspondence are not speedy pastimes. I have copied hundreds of inscriptions from rotting cemetery slabs. I have trudged scores of miles searching out the dim outlines of ancient buffalo traces, Indian highways, and frontier roads. I have trailed the mere ghost of a fact for years at a time through dozens of shadowy recollections before it could be induced at last to take form in reality.

"Johnny Appleseed" for instance. The records gave every reason to suppose that "Johnny" must have crossed our section of Ohio many times during the early 1800's. In fact, to this day we call the seedling apples that spring up in our fence rows "Johnny Appleseed" trees. But why, unless there was an older tradition based in fact? It was a long search before we found the one old man who in his youth had been shown by an elderly lady the exact spot where she as a girl had seen the rotting brush fence which "Johnny" himself had piled about his little nursery to ward off deer and straying cattle. There is real excitement in presiding at the last-minute rescue of a colorful fact which is just about to slip away forever.

The yarns and anecdotes persist more tenaciously of course. Many of them are apocryphal, no doubt, for I often hear analogues from other neighborhoods. But it doesn't matter—once a story gets firmly attached to a definite personality, it is as much ours as if we had the sworn evidence. Of such is the substance of sagas!

Bill Perrin's possum, for example, which turned out to be just a louse in his eyelash—in some parts of the country the possum is replaced by a wild turkey or a bobcat.

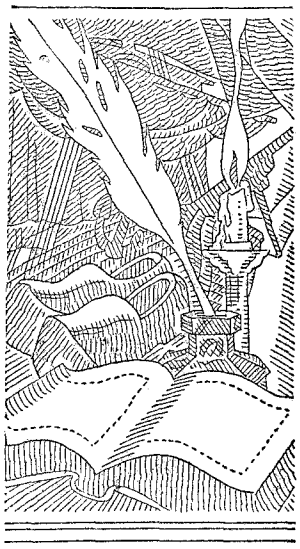
Jim Brunson's coon tree is another old theme with many modern variations. Jim noticed a huge oak in his woodlot one day with a curious crack running all the way up the trunk, which kept opening and closing at regular intervals. Jim and his boys felled the tree and found that it contained seventy-eight coons, one possum, and a turkey buzzard (this enumeration varies with each authority) all packed in so tight that they had been breathing in unison, the combined force being sufficient to open and close the crack!

A great percentage of the anecdotes center in the country church, because, I suppose, a background of sanctity offers the brightest foil for old-time incongruities. How could any one forget the baptizing of big Bill Hoskins when, after he had scrambled up out of the water, they had seen him grab anxiously at his hip pocket as he remarked to a friend on the bank, "Bygawd! It didn't even wet my terbacker!"

Si Lucas and Bob Fletcher, two other rough personalities of an earlier day, were loyal members of the local Baptist flock. Old Si liked to sing and Bob could read with dignity and unction. It was not surprising, therefore, one Sunday morning when, the preacher having failed to keep his appointment, the congregation looked to Si and Bob to lead the service. Si, however, was evidently perturbed, for he was heard remarking to Bob, "Say, Bob, you can read the lesson all right, and I can sing, but who in hell will do the praying?"

Maybe our country has been going through much the same predicament lately!

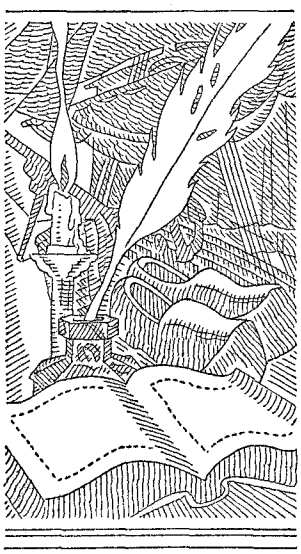
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



AS I LIKE IT

By William Lyon Phelps

Mr. Lewis's Fourteenth Novel . . . Charles Morgan on George Moore . . . Stephen Leacock, Humorist . . . F. P. A.'s Pepys Diary . . . Sundae History



SINCLAIR LEWIS has produced fourteen full-length novels. I have read them all, from *Our Mr. Wrenn* (1914) to and including *It Can't Happen Here* (1935). *Main Street, Babbitt,* and *Arrowsmith* were explosions that shook the whole literary world; critics and book-reviewers in far-distant countries felt the seismatic disturbances. The words Main Street and Babbitt are as well known and as well understood today as Pecksniff and Uriah Heep; for Mr. Lewis's immense reputation began with *Main Street* and was strengthened by *Babbitt;* these are the only two of his books that could have started it; these stories were greeted with that double delight of surprise and recognition that Henry James called essential.

Yet although I freely recognize the amazing ability displayed in those two works, they are not my favorites; of all his books, the two that I enjoy the most are *Dodsworth* and *Work of Art,* though I know very well that they could not have attracted universal attention. I am speaking only of my personal enjoyment in reading.

And by the same token, the two books of his that give me the least pleasure are *Elmer Gantry* and *Ann Vickers.*

Mr. Lewis has always combined the holy zeal of an evangelist with the skill of the objective novelist; but *It Can't Happen Here* differs from his previous works in having its scenes laid in the future, and in being, quite frankly, propaganda.

The story opens in 1936 and closes in 1939; and the title "It Can't" means of course "It Can." Mr. Lewis thinks that one of the chief causes that make it a possibility is the too general belief that it is an impossibility. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

The author has nowhere committed himself to prophecy; he does not predict Fascism in the United States. My conjecture is that he does not really think it will happen. In this novel, he shows only that it might happen, and how. And the "how" is a brilliant *tour de force,* in which Mr. Lewis displays those gifts of mimicry in which he is without a rival. Although all these events and these conversations take place in an imaginary future time, they seem as real as if he were recording history. This is the main triumph of the book.

It may be merely my dislike of all forms of propaganda that stands in the way of my enjoyment of this novel; I recognize the skill displayed, but I cannot warm up, I cannot become excited.

Mr. Lewis himself is not a radical, not a revolutionist, not a Communist; he is primarily a novelist, who has chosen to depict certain features of contemporary social and political life, and to suggest their possible tendencies. He loves his art and he loves the individual freedom necessary to art more than any other two things. I suppose politically he might be called a Liberal.

His newspaper editor, Doremus, comes near to stating Mr. Lewis's position on page 432:

> As a newspaper man, Doremus remembered that the only reporters who misrepresented and concealed facts more unscrupulously than the Capitalists were the Communists.
>
> He was afraid that the world struggle today was not of Communism against Fascism, but of tolerance against the bigotry that was preached equally by Communism and Fascism. But he saw too that in America the struggle was befogged by the fact that the worst Fascists were they who disowned the word "Fascism" and preached enslavement to Capitalism under the style of Constitutional and Traditional Native American Liberty. For they were thieves not only of wages but of honor. To their purpose they could quote not only Scripture but Jefferson.
>
> That Karl Pascal should be turning into a zealot, like most of his chiefs in the Communist party, was grievous to Doremus because he had once simple-heartedly hoped that in the mass strength of Communism there might be an escape from cynical dictatorship. But he saw now that he must remain alone, a "liberal," scorned by all the noisier prophets for refusing to be a willing cat for the busy monkeys of either side. But at worst, the Liberals, the Tolerant, might in the long run preserve some of the arts of civilization, no matter which brand of tyranny should finally dominate the world.

A very interesting and significant thing in this novel is that the "good" characters look to Canada as the Land of Freedom. Indeed they escape from the tyranny of the United States not to Russia—but to Canada. Mr. Lewis, with his infallible instinct for mass sentiment, knows that many thoughtful and liberty-loving Americans are enviously looking to our neighbor on the north in a way that could not have been even dimly imagined twenty years ago. Such a regard is worth a chronicle.

Another thing. Mr. Lewis certainly has never lacked either courage or frankness; no one could accuse him of undue reticence. Thus I am interested to see in this novel that when certain expressions are used in conversation and certain epithets applied to certain

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

persons, the words themselves are represented by dashes and are not printed in full. This return to the decencies and proprieties does not indicate any lack of realism and does not reduce the hitting power of phrases. Perhaps it may indicate that Mr. Lewis believes that readers are "fed up" with the complete spelling out on the printed page of obscenities, blasphemies, and various indecencies; and that he is leading the way back. Mr. Lewis is a writer of such vigor that he does not have to assert it.

Epitaph on George Moore, by Charles Morgan, is a small book of great value. Mr. Moore wisely selected Mr. Morgan as his official biographer; but after a vast amount of work had been completed, Mr. Morgan discovered that he could not obtain access to a series of vitally important letters. He therefore abandoned the task regretfully enough; and yet being a novelist himself, much of whose time is taken up also with daily play-reviewing, I think he ought to feel more relief than vexation. This *Epitaph* is admirable both in its intimate revelation of Moore as man and as artist, and in its judicial and judicious criticisms of his work. Mr. Morgan believes that George Moore was one of the great English novelists and that his books will enjoy permanent fame.

Another terrific blast against war and once more from an accomplished artist, is *Mars His Idiot* by H. M. Tomlinson. No one book will save the world; but it is just possible, by the accumulation of anti-war books, that universal peace may be brought a little nearer. The soloists are sounding more and more like a chorus. The quotations chosen for this book by Mr. Tomlinson are startling. Here is one from Charles Lamb, written in 1830.

> Alas! can we ring the bells backward? Can we unlearn the arts that pretend to civilize, and then burn the world? There is a march of science; but who shall beat the drums for its retreat?

Booth Tarkington has written a novel of the fourth dimension in *Mr. White, The Red Barn, Hell, and Bridewater,* a long title for a short book. His Preface is one of the best things he has ever composed; and is necessary for the understanding of what follows. As Mr. Lewis placed the scenes of his new novel in the years 1936–1939, so Mr. Tarkington has placed his in the years after death, even though they take place on the earth and amid familiar scenes in New York and elsewhere. Here the art of the realistic novelist is employed for a mystical purpose. This is not only one of the most brilliant, one of the most original of Mr. Tarkington's novels, it is assuredly one of the most interesting. No one will find it otherwise.

Stephen Leacock's book called *Humor* is by one of the foremost of living humorists. He does not kill humor by analyzing it; he rather helps us to appreciate it. He is probably correct in believing that humor reached a world climax in the nineteenth century and especially in two men, Dickens and Mark Twain. I share Mr. Leacock's lack of enthusiasm for much of ancient and medieval humor; it is dull stuff, for the most part. And Artemus Ward, who made the English-speaking world rock with laughter in the days just before Mark Twain, is now unreadable. Mr. Leacock's comparison of Dickens with our great American is full of interest.

> For what one may call the mere mechanism of humor, Mark Twain offers a much more available study than Dickens. Indeed if I were to undertake to deliver one of those college courses on "The Technique of Humor" of which mention was made at the opening of this book, I should make much of Mark Twain. A student of a serious mind could learn better from Mark Twain than from any other source how to get rid of it. This is not merely on account of his eminence. Charles Dickens stands at least as eminent as a humorist, if not higher. But Mark Twain was beyond anybody in the world a technical humorist. He combined the basis of the matter—the inspiration—with the mechanism of it. He brings into play, far more than Dickens, the resources of technique, the surprise of words, the shifting dexterity of form. Hence it comes that Mark Twain can be quoted in single sentences, Dickens mostly only in pages. Dickens, both for humor and pathos, must move along on a full flood tide of words. Mark Twain can make a splash even in a puddle. One could put together a joke book of humorous extracts out of Mark Twain. It would be quite hard to do it out of Dickens. The funniest things in Dickens are all part of something else. Much in Mark Twain can stand alone.

He points out also that Mark Twain's humor, typically American, very often makes the joke at his own expense; his own failures and stupidities and run of bad luck are the material for fun. This Dickens does not do at all; it is always some one else who supplies the material for laughter.

It is certainly interesting that Mark Twain could see nothing funny in Dickens. He read through *Pickwick Papers* without a smile. Which reminds me that the famous German novelist Paul Heyse, Nobel Prize winner, asked me in 1904 who was the greatest living American writer. I said, "Mark Twain." Herr Heyse replied that he had heard Mark Twain was very funny, so he read through the whole of *Huckleberry Finn,* and never found anything funny in it.

The Diary of Our Own Samuel Pepys, 1911–1934, by F. P. A. (Franklin P. Adams), fills two sumptuous volumes and 1271 pages, without counting the excellent Index. He began writing a daily column in June, 1911, and I remember very well reading it with extreme pleasure in *The New York Evening Mail.* The heading was "Always in Good Humor." In 1914, when he transferred his talent to *The New York Tribune,* he called the column "The Conning Tower." Later he went to *The World* and in 1931 back to *The Herald Tribune* where all his readers (with a few disgruntled exceptions) share his hope that he will remain till death does them part. If I remember rightly, there was some trouble for a time about his retaining the excellent title "The Conning Tower," and so he perforce called the column simply "The Tower." But the name was finally regained by its proper owner.

In reprinting these commentaries, F. P. A. tells us that he has added nothing and changed nothing. The temptation to do this must have been strong; but there are few writers who could so well afford to leave unaltered their past opinions, judgments, and comments. For F. P. A. is not only one of our leading humorists and one of our most graceful versificators. He is a shrewd and penetrating critic, with no fads; guided only by a love of wit, intelligence, and beauty; and he is a thorough believer in individual liberty.

Apart from the pleasure that hundreds of thousands of readers find in his daily column, and will re-find in these two volumes, he is one of the most efficient school-masters who teach correct English without pedantry. He

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

combines accuracy with almost infallible good taste.

A book that will have a small circulation but which should be read by the thoughtful is *Paul Elmer More, and American Criticism,* by Robert Shafer. I regard Mr. More as the greatest living American philosopher, as our most profound literary critic, and as one of our foremost scholars. The style of this biographical work is often irritating; but the book will reward the right readers.

Among the new books of poetry, do not overlook *The Dog Beneath the Skin,* by W. H. Auden. I do not share Mr. Auden's political tenets, but I certainly enjoy the satire in this poem, and applaud the righteous anger it reveals against injustice and cruelty and stupidity.

For that large number of persons who are called on to preside at various meetings, and wish to be familiar with the rules governing such organizations, I have just the thing to satisfy their wants. It is a slender volume called *Parliamentary Law and Procedure,* and is written by the Honorable John Q. Tilson, for many years Representative in Congress from Connecticut, Majority Leader of the House, and in earlier days Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives. A foreword is supplied by Speaker Joseph W. Byrns. This book has not only the advantage of being up to date (1935), it gives all the rules clearly and compactly.

In the sixteenth volume of the indispensable *Dictionary of American Biography,* covering the names from Robert to Seward, the mighty figure of Theodore Roosevelt dominates the field, his name receiving 17 columns. Others who have been awarded much space are Josiah Royce with 13¼, Augustus Saint-Gaudens 13, Winfield Scott 12, William H. Seward 12½, John S. Sargent 8, Carl Schurz 8½, Benjamin Rush 7½, John Sevier 7, Raphael Semmes, 6.

Now the only adverse criticism I have on this volume is the disproportionately small space given to John Singer Sargent, a man of genius, one of the great painters of all time. To give him eight columns and Winfield Scott twelve seems to me ridiculous.

Look over this list that I have selected from the immense number of names and see how many are familiar to you. Ezekiel Robinson, Stuart Robson, Comte de Rochambeau, James Jeffrey Roche, William Rockefeller, Knute Rockne, E. P. Roe, H. H. Rogers, Henry Wade Rogers, John Rogers, John Rolfe, William J. Rolfe, Ole E. Rölvaag, Henry Romeike, George F. Root, James H. Ropes, W. S. Rosecrans 3⅔, Betsy Ross, William F. Round, Richard Rush 5½, Sol Smith Russell, Henry Rutgers, John Rutledge 4, Thomas Fortune Ryan 5½, Margaret Sage, Russell Sage 2, Arthur St. Clair 4, Gurdon Saltonstall, Edgar Saltus, William T. Sampson, F. B. Sanborn, Sibyl Sanderson, Margaret Sangster, Dudley A. Sargent, Sassacus, Minot J. Savage, John G. Saxe, Winfield S. Schley, Eugene Schuyler, Clinton Scollard, Dred Scott, Fred Newton Scott, Charles Scribner, Charles Scribner, Jr., E. W. Scripps, James E. Scripps, Horace E. Scudder, Samuel Seabury, Alan Seeger, Julius H. Seelye, L. C. Seelye, Edward C. Seguin, Anton Seidl, Joseph Seligman, Isaiah Sellers, James Seth, Samuel Sewall.

Here is an interesting letter from the distinguished dramatist St. John Ervine, whose biography of General Booth I reviewed at length in the October issue. As he is probably the only man who has ever read every number of *The Warcry,* I asked him if there were any truth in a statement that I used to hear very often forty years ago, that the Salvation Army sang a song called "There are no flies on Jesus."

My dear Billy,

I've never heard of that hymn, and I feel certain it exists only in somebody's imagination. The number of people who tell you that they know *positively* this, that or the other makes me wonder why Ananias was singled out for summary treatment. When a man assures me that he *knows for a fact* so-and-so, I say to myself, "Damned liar! . . ." At the risk of being called one myself, I want to say "I know for a fact you're telling lies!"

But supposing there had been such a hymn, what's wrong with it? Isn't "There are no flies on Jesus" merely a colloquial rendering of Galatians vi, 7: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." There was a very popular padre in the war who once said to the Tommies, "Don't you chaps run away with the idea that God's a bloody fool!" A number of refined persons were extremely shocked, but the Tommies loved the man and instantly perceived his point. Supposing a simple preacher in a village in America said to a congregation of rustics, "You can't put anything over on God!" Would anybody in his senses suppose him to be blasphemous or even vulgar? He would surely be talking to them in the language they understood, the language that most vividly conveyed to their minds the thought he was trying to express. Shaw's *Blanco Posnet* puts the argument, I think, with great force. We Protestants rejected Latin from our religious services, in spite of its manifold advantages, such as its universality, because we wished to have them rendered in language "understanded of the people." Well, there are varieties of ways of understanding language, and although a hymn, with "There are no flies on Jesus" is not likely to move you or me, there must be millions of people to whom it instantly and more vividly than any other form of words expresses what Paul said to the Galatians.

There is a passage in *God's Soldier* where I describe Booth's attitude towards those who charged his soldiers with calling for three cheers for Jesus Christ. They hadn't, in fact, done so, but Booth rightly retorted to their accusers, "Why shouldn't they call for cheers for Christ!" and thereafter, I have been told, he himself often invited a meeting to give them. That's what I call turning the enemy's guns against him. . . .

My religious views are not orthodox. Far from it. I find that when I read the Apostle's Creed, I stop at "I believe in God!" That's as far as I can get without arguing or qualifying. I share Dean Inge's belief that Christianity is a life to be lived rather than a creed to be believed, and I think that it would be enough for all of us if we reduced our creeds to the Founder's assertion that we should love God and our neighbour as ourselves. Everything that is important is in that. All else is perplexity. You will scarcely believe me when I tell you that the town of Dornoch, in Scotland, at this moment is shaken to its core because a Provost gave a children's party at Christmas and little boys and girls were allowed to dance together. The elders of the Provost's Church have solemnly suspended the Provost! . . . If I were God, I'd dump the whole lot in hell. Don't these people ever read their Bible? Are they incapable of realizing the geniality of Jesus, his mateiness, his ease in any company, the pleasure his mere presence in a house gave to its occupants, how quick he was to join in the fun? I mean, Billy, that the man who turned up at a wedding feast in Cana, and, finding his host in a jamb about wine, immediately got him out of it, was not the sort of man who would have turned sulky about a children's Christmas dance. Please don't suppose from this that I'm one of those flabby people who are tolerant of everything. I'm not. But when I'm intolerant, I try to be intolerant about something that matters and not about trifles or harmless things. As a small boy in Ulster, I could not bring myself to believe that God, who had made the Universe, would fly into a rage if he saw me playing marbles on Sunday, and I suspected that my elders who said he *would,* were attributing to him their own mean natures.

With reference to the history of the word "Sundae," I received the following letters: from Miss Zaida Nicholson of New York:

In regard to your query in the current "As I Like It" in SCRIBNER'S, as to the origin of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the word Sundae, please let me reply as follows:

In a newspaper or magazine—name and date now forgotten—I read that one warm Sunday in New Orleans two ladies went into a drug store and asked for sodas. The druggist however found he had only cream and syrup on hand and offered his customers portions of this mixture. They found the resulting confection delicious. The druggist continued to supply these very popular sodaless sodas to his general customers and decided to call them Sundaes in honor of the day on which they had been invented.

From Richard Lloyd Jones of *The Tulsa Tribune,* Tulsa, Okla.:

Words are full of romance. I too enjoy the history of words, so was I attracted to your references in October SCRIBNER'S to the delectable "sundae." Perhaps the dictionary makers did not know what I think I know about the origin of that term. And perhaps I do not know the truth.

I grew up as a Chicago kid who did the things that most city boys do. I chased the fire engines all over Chicago and was as much a patron of the soda fountains as my purse would permit. I remember when the sundae first appeared over the marble fountain counter and I remember the soda jerkers of that time relating the story of the origin which was something like this:

Evanston, Chicago's Godly neighbor, "Heavenston" as the good Frances E. Willard used to call it, was in those days at least rather Methodist minded. The piety of that town resented the dissipating influences of the soda fountain on Sunday and the good town fathers, yielding to this churchly influence, passed an ordinance prohibiting the retailing of ice cream sodas on Sunday.

Some ingenious confectioners and drug-store operators, in "Heavenston," obeying the law, served ice cream with the syrup of your choice without the soda. Thereby complying with the law. They did not serve ice-cream sodas. They served sodas without soda on Sunday. The sodaless soda was the Sunday soda. It proved palatable and popular and orders for Sundays began to cross the counters on Mondays.

Objection then was made to christening a dish after the Sabbath. So the spelling of "Sunday" was changed. It became an established dish and an established word and finally the Heavenston "sundae" appeared even in Congregational Connecticut.

From David Shulman, of the Bronx, New York:

In regard to "sundae" which the older editions of Webster's New International say is equivalent to "college ice," there is an etymology which you and others overlook. It is the following from Tucker's book on American English (p. 306):

"SUNDAY—sometimes misspelled 'sundae'—Name said to have been first used, about 1897, at Red Cross Pharmacy, State St., Ithaca, N. Y., directly opposite to barroom of Ithaca Hotel, which was closed on Sunday, suggesting to the pharmacy people to offer a distinctively Sunday drink."

Professor Krapp alludes to this derivation (Eng. Tg. in America, v. 1, p. 142). However, he does not accept this explanation as final. Nevertheless, Tucker tells us that "sundae" was used long before the quotations you give from Oxford Supplement. The two volume Oxford gives only the date 1920.

Here is an interesting letter from Mr. O. J. Mitchell, of Los Angeles, Cal.:

In running over some back numbers of "SCRIBNER'S," I note with a great deal of gratification in the December, '34, under "Books I Like," your review of Harold Bell Wright's latest book, *To My Sons.*

Coming from a gentleman of your prominence in the literary world, this review is particularly interesting. For several years, I was secretarily associated with Mr. Wright. In this association, I had become familiar in talks with Mr. Wright with his early life long before *To My Sons* was put in print. This review is the only one I have seen on the book. If there have been any other reviews, it does not matter; what you have said is worth a thousand, good, bad, or indifferent. Whether Mr. Wright has seen it, I don't know; but I intend to send it to him: I think he will be glad to read it. . . .

Tho' you say ". . . I don't care myself for Mr. Wright's novels," I have a feeling, should you ever meet him, you would like Wright himself. Some months ago, he left Tucson for California. Near Escondido, San Diego County, on a fine place of his own selection and making, a place he calls "The Farm," he is living in very good health, busy "in growing things for the good of everybody," and getting out of it a great deal of happiness. On your next vacation (I see you have been doing England), put California on your map. Then, if you come out, I'll give you a card to Wright.

Here is an interesting letter from Doctor Kenneth D. Coates, of the Department of English, Wofford College, Spartanburg, S. C.:

In the November installment of your "As I Like It" Mr. H. L. McKnight speaks of a "long" sentence of 423 words in Mr. Hemingway's *Green Hills of Africa,* and wants to know if you can "beat it."

If Mr. McKnight will get down his copy of *Leaves of Grass* (I hope he has one, as Walt could give *any* Chamber of Commerce Secretary lessons in "boosting,") and turn to stanza 15 of "Song of Myself" he will find a sentence of more than 900 words; then, if he will turn to stanza 33 he will find a sentence of more than 1100 words with more than 100 commas, not to speak of semicolons.

It might also be mentioned in this connection that there are probably a good many sentences in the prose writings of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries that are almost as long as that of Mr. Hemingway's. Some years ago I had occasion to study the average length of sentences of representative prose writers from Sir Philip Sidney down to the present. And I was somewhat surprised to find that whereas the sentences averaged from 60 to 75 words in Sir Philip's day, they gradually got shorter until today the average is nearer twenty.

Does the quickened tempo of our daily living have anything to do with this rapid shortening of sentences? Or is the shorter sentence the result of the fact that in the last hundred years the printed word has been extended to ever-increasing numbers of the masses, who, naturally, are less capable of understanding the long and involved sentence structure of bygone centuries?

Mrs. C. P. Britton, of Wyncote, Pa., writes me:

Your question in the October SCRIBNER'S "Do you know why bridges were covered?" to which you answer "Neither does anybody else," I should think might be answered by others of my age—eighty years—to other times, other uses. It was because the winter snows broke the open *wooden* bridges. I was a native of a southern New Jersey town where there was only one road out of the town that was not built over a causeway. The covered bridge was a prominent feature; hence the vivid recollection of Somebody else.

THE FAERIE QUEENE CLUB

The Faerie Queene Club acquires two new members this month—Mr. John W. Suter of Andover, Maine, and Miss Dorothy E. Glassburn, of Pittsburgh, Pa.

ANTHONY ADVERSE CLUB

I have the pleasure of welcoming into the Anthony Adverse Club Mr. and Mrs. Edwin B. Gilbert of New Haven, Conn.

As an example of 100 per cent loyalty, I should like to print the following letter from one who had questioned my accuracy on a certain point.

Sir:

Of course you are right. Even when I thought you were wrong I was sure you were right! Thanks.

BOOKS MENTIONED, WITH NAMES OF PUBLISHERS

It Can't Happen Here, by Sinclair Lewis. Doubleday Doran. $2.50.

Mars His Idiot, by H. M. Tomlinson. Harper. $2.50.

Mr. White, The Red Barn, Hell, and Bridewater, by Booth Tarkington. Doubleday Doran. $1.25.

Epitaph on George Moore, by Charles Morgan. Macmillan. $1.25.

Humor, by Stephen Leacock. Dodd Mead. $2.50.

Paul Elmer More and American Criticism, by R. Shafer. Yale. $4.

The Dog Beneath the Skin, by W. H. Auden. Random House. $1.50.

Parliamentary Law and Procedure, by J. Q. Tilson. Ransdell Inc., Washington. $2.

The Diary of Our Own Samuel Pepys, by F. P. A. Two vols. Simon & Schuster. $6.

Dictionary of American Biography, Vol XVI. Twenty Volumes. Scribners.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Behind the Scenes

● About SCRIBNER authors. . . . James Truslow Adams back in this country. . . . A series by Nicholas Murray Butler. . . . Music students. . . . Art schools. . . . King Cotton's Slaves. . . . Parents and Childless.

"The Changing Constitution—Is It Adequate Today?" is the second of a series that **James Truslow Adams** is writing on the subject of the Constitution and its relation to present problems in this country. Mr. Adams has returned to the United States after several years of living in England.

William Faulkner, of Oxford, Mississippi, author of *Sanctuary* and *Light in August,* is still living in Oxford, still writing novels. He writes that the facts about him are "same as before." Says he's "been breathing and working and still doing both: now at a novel which I hope and trust will justify both states or conditions."

Probably there is no one better qualified than **Nicholas Murray Butler** to write the story of fourteen Republican Conventions. He was, of course, present at all of them, and at many took his place as an important figure in the Convention. This article deals with conventions from 1880 through 1896. It is the third in a series of articles on various subjects, by Doctor Butler under a general title "Across the Busy Years," appearing in the magazine.

Eugene Lyons has been close to the Russian situation since 1922 when he edited the *Soviet Russia Pictorial* in this country. Since then he has been United Press correspondent in Russia for six years and is a close student of the development of Communistic philosophy and practice.

"Dixie, Harlem, and Tin-Pan Alley" or "Who Writes Negro Music?" is answered by one who should know. For four years **Sigmund Spaeth** was music critic for *The New York Evening Mail* and wrote about music for *The New York Times* and other papers and magazines. That was obviously some time ago. Now he is lecturing and broadcasting on the Pacific Coast and after Christmas is going to tour the South and the Middle West. He is the author of thirteen books on music, both popular and informative, the latest of which is *The Art of Enjoying Music,* but the best known probably *Read 'em and Weep.* He has appeared on the screen in a number of short pictures of his own creation and he plans to make more movies soon.

The first story which **Jo Pagano** published in SCRIBNER'S, "The Disinherited," has been made into a sixteen-millimeter film by the actor Lew Ayres and has received such favorable recognition that Mr. Ayres is now considering amplifying it into a feature. There are two writers in the Pagano family, brother Ernest being a well-known scenarist and an associate producer at R. K. O. His mother and father are both living and much as he describes them in the story. His father started life in this country as a coal-miner in Colorado. The author of "Return to the Source" is the youngest of five children and he has been writing since he was sixteen, though his earlier impulse was more toward painting than writing. He says "whatever talent I have reaches its highest fruition in the spaghetti which I occasionally cook for my friends." Fortunate friends, then.

Percy Winner's official title is *Redacteur-en-Chef pour les Services de l'Amerique du Nord de l'Agence Havas,* which translated, means that he is in charge of all the news emanating from the United States, Canada, Mexico, Cuba and Central America of the Havas News Agency of France which is the largest international news agency in the world. In that capacity he directs a large staff of men who furnish news from America to the entire world—for example, thousands of newspapers in all the European countries, all the South American countries, all of North Africa, Turkey, Japan, China, Manchukuo, etc. He also writes weekly analyses of the American political and economic situation which leave New York for the Far East (in English), for France and Europe (in French), and for Central and South America (in Spanish).

O. R. Pilat (pronounced pilot) says that his most amusing job was working for eight months as associate of William Griffith compiling *The American Scrapbook* and *The European Scrapbook,* although he never heard of anybody's buying either. His nicest job was as European correspondent for *The Brooklyn Eagle* during 1933–34. His present job is editing a column called "By the Way" for *The Brooklyn Eagle.* His most disgraceful experience (he says) was fainting during the proceedings when he was assigned to an electrocution at Sing Sing, and his pleasantest experience was hearing that E. V. Lucas liked his book *Sea-Mary.* He has worked in many boats, and all kinds of boats, including a five-masted schooner, a freighter, in tugboats, dredges, wire-drag boats, etc.

Paul Hutchinson has been working and writing for magazines and newspapers since 1921 and is now managing editor of *The Christian Century.* He is thoroughly familiar with newspaper psychology and newspaper ethics both in this country and in England so that he is on well-known ground when he writes "Why Blame It on the Papers?"

Just when **Edna Yost** was on top of the difficulties of establishing herself as a free lance writer, some years ago, the physical difficulties which she describes in "A Patient Wants to Know" began to beset her with the ensuing experiences. She is the author of many articles, short stories, and poems which have appeared in leading magazines throughout the country. At present she is teaching classes in short-story writing.

The writer of "New York Is Not a Home Town" came to New York after graduating from an Eastern college, and as she openly confesses has

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lived in New York ever since. She has been on the staff of several magazines, and her writing "is not always invidious comparisons, nor always anonymous."

Inis Weed Jones has written on nearly every subject from nursing to cats. She has just published a child's book about her own cat, called *Peetie*. During the last few months she has been making a special study, from the adolescent's point of view, of the social life which New York and other large cities provide for the twelve- to sixteen-year-olds. "Ordeal by the Dance" includes some of the results of this study.

THE anonymous article, "Music Student," which appeared in the November issue, apparently touched a vital and sore spot in the life of music teachers and music pupils in New York and all over the country. Some one high in music circles in New York wrote us:

I read with the greatest interest the anonymous article by a music student. I wish there was a possibility of having that article read by everybody interested in students.

It is all too true and of course one recognizes all the names. I could add much more to that article especially in regards to the endowed foundation that is such a racket, with teachers getting as much as $100 an hour and the scholarship pupils having to earn their way in order to be able to use these scholarships. It's too long a story to write about here.

However, I hope that there will be a way of having your article get a widespread circulation. A young girl came to me a few weeks ago from the West laden with letters for high officials here, from the governor of her state and the Honorable ——. The young girl is entirely unfitted with a mediocre talent and when I told her so with tears she said she could not go back home now. She has no money and wants to earn to pay for her studies. Naturally on account of the letters from such eminent people—who meant it kindly—that young girl is received and that's the end of it. We all know to what that leads —and there are thousands.

James C. Boudreau, Director of the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, comes to the rescue of the art schools, discussed in October:

ART-TRAINED STUDENTS

Sir: In your SCRIBNER'S, October, 1935, as a contribution to "Straws in the Wind," Charles T. Coiner presents a most interesting article entitled "Our Out-of-Date Art Schools." While Mr. Coiner's indictment fits the situation in probably 95 per cent of our art institutions, unfortunately he gives the reader the definite impression that there are no Up-to-Date American Art Schools.

The Art School of Pratt Institute is one of a regrettably small number that are actually meeting the challenge of Commerce and Industry. The New York School of Fine and Applied Arts, The Rhode Island School of Design, and The Chicago Academy of Fine Arts are properly included within the list of institutions alert to vital contemporary art outlets. There are others.

The Educational Philosophy that underlies the art training at Pratt Institute has two basic objectives. The first calls for a continuously changing program that synchronizes with the best contemporary professional practices. This is achieved through a faculty and student body who work together in terms of the business and art activities prevalent in the Commercial and Industrial worlds.

This presupposes a corps of instructors who themselves are leaders in the various professional art fields. Our faculty list of 67 day and 27 evening instructors is a veritable "Who's Who" in commercial and industrial art. In turn the students must of necessity adopt an attitude of seriousness and application which under the direction of this faculty develops a wholesome professional atmosphere.

At the conclusion of such a three-year program of study the graduate finds he is in the happy situation of having no gap to bridge between his art training and the workaday world.

The second objective, predicated upon the first, maintains that the educational intent of the Art School is fully realized only when all its graduates are employed in the professional art field for which they trained. We are approaching this realization. Six months after graduation the 1934 class totalling 181, reported 93 per cent employed, 91 per cent of whom were in the field for which they specialized. We are happy to report that 30 per cent of the outgoing February, 1936, group have already been placed in regular positions. All will agree that art-trained youths are needed in Commerce and Industry.

Francis I. du Pont of Wilmington, Del., writes the following letter to C. T. Carpenter, about his article "King Cotton's Slaves" in the October issue:

HOMESTEAD PROBLEMS

Dear Mr. Carpenter: First, let me say that your article is excellent. It commands the respect of the reader because it is clear that you know whereof you are writing.

You have touched upon a subject which is far greater than you realize. To you the matter seems to be comprised in the problem of cotton planting with the inevitable injustice suffered by the weaker parties to the contract.

The remedy suggested by you in my opinion comes nearer to what will have to be done than anything I have seen advocated. What would you think of exchanging the titles of ownership of the land for restricted titles in which the property could not be sold for a price greater than cost to replace improvements—houses, etc.?

Let this restriction attach to the title forever. If you think about this you will see advantages which it is not necessary for me to enumerate.

This would automatically cover the point that the land should be homesteads. If land so restricted should cover any large area, then banks would lend money (after the system had been established) unhesitatingly for improvements. As more farmers located near each other, instead of a speculative value of land being developed, the security for the loans would become better.

I strongly advise you to read *Progress and Poverty* by Henry George. . . . His suggestion of tax on the value of land, was only a suggestion and while very attractive, I think is inadequate for agricultural land, as the value of this is so low that such taxation as could be levied would be ineffectual.

I am trying to convert Mr. M. to this view of the matter as I believe that the industrial problem is not helped by government interference in business, but is vitally dependent upon whether men can do as the pioneers in all countries have done, make their living from the earth.

Do not fail to read *Progress and Poverty*. It is the most magnificent analysis of the forces tending to develop or destroy our civilization.

Gilbert Seldes, with his article discussing the war between parents and the childless, has stirred up an army of supporters. Mrs. J. M. Nuding of Palo Alto, California, writes:

PARENTS VS. NON-PARENTS

Dear Sir: Thank you for printing Gilbert Seldes' article, "Parents Versus Non-Parents."

We already have the nucleus of an organization of parents, in the Parent-Teachers Association. I think we could fairly align about half of the unmarried teachers on the side of parents. However, there are restrictions on the political activities of this organization. According to the National Association's Constitution at present, the State and Local units may indorse political movements, and specific measures or propositions, but they may not indorse candidates. I do not think this is a bad restriction. But the worst part of it is that not nearly enough of the permitted political activity is actually indulged in by the units. What there is is usually highly local, whereas statewide measures often are even more important from the point of view of children's welfare.

Another thing which greatly limits the activity of this organization is that usually only the mothers belong because the meetings are held in the afternoon. Some progressive units have evening meetings and make a special effort to get fathers interested. I think it would help a lot if this practice were adopted everywhere, because of course men have more knowledge of politics, and getting things done on a big scale, though they may not know so much about what actually needs to be done. There is practically no field of present day life in which husband and wife work together, since even in the home the management of children is often left entirely to the mother, the father only taking a critical interest in the results (which is an entirely different thing from a constructive interest in the methods). We sorely need some force to counteract this tendency, which of course has been brought about by the concentration of men on making money, and the concentration of women on running the home and spending the money. Formerly, of course, they both worked on the home premises producing the actual goods needed by the family, and the surrounding influences were more or less under their joint control. It is likely that

(*Continued in Advertising Section*)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

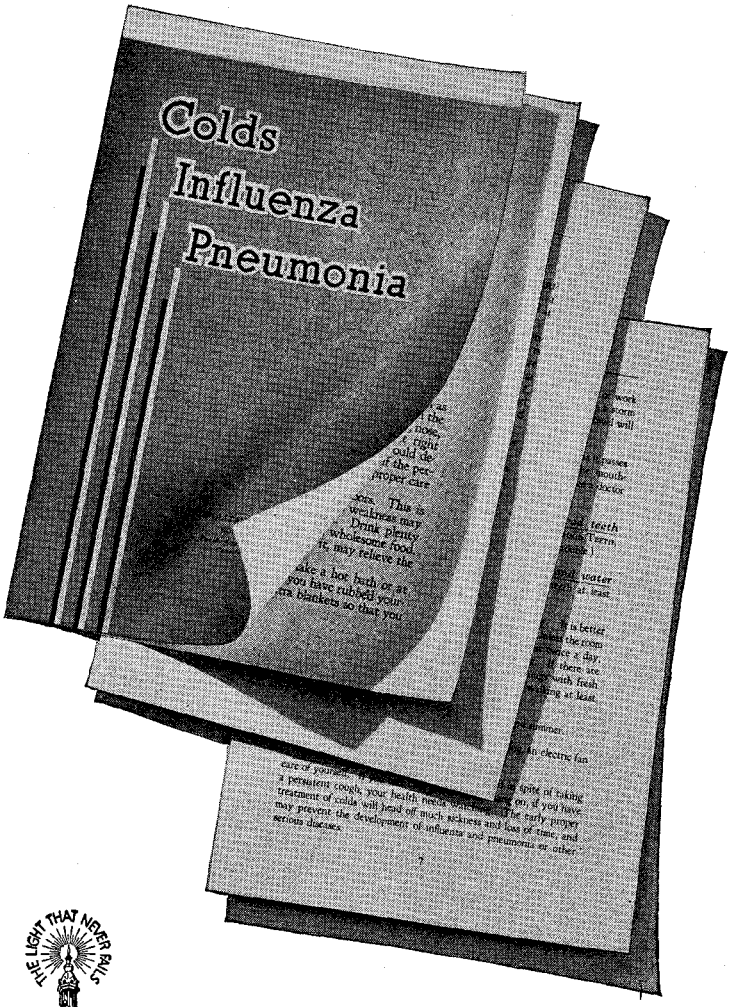
Health Enemy No. 1 —the Common Cold

LOOK out for the common cold! Last year it cost more than 500 million dollars in wages, caused more absence from work than any other form of sickness, robbed millions of children of time from school.

Look out for the common cold! It may pave the way for other dangerous enemies of health — influenza and pneumonia, and even tuberculosis. In addition, a cold may often lead to chronic catarrh of the nasal passages, to ear trouble, bronchitis or inflammation of the sinuses—the cavities in the bones of the skull. A cold can easily become a serious matter.

The best time to prevent serious trouble is at the very beginning. The moment your nose begins to run, your throat feels sore, your eyes burn and your back begins to ache, or your head stops up—organize your counterattack on Health Enemy No. 1.

Take no chances. Stay at home. Rest in bed. Stay away from other people—colds are often contagious. Drink plenty of water and eat lightly of simple, nourishing foods. If there is no improvement in your condition the next day, call the doctor. If you are feverish, send for the doctor at once. Do not ignore a cold no matter how trifling it seems. If you take proper care of yourself from the first sniffle, it will not, in a great majority of cases, develop into a serious illness.



The Metropolitan's booklet, "Colds, Influenza, Pneumonia," contains the best medical advice on the subject of colds. Send for your free copy.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, Dept. 136-S.
1 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y.

Please send me a free copy of your booklet, "Colds, Influenza, Pneumonia."

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

FREDERICK H. ECKER, PRESIDENT

ONE MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N. Y.

©1935 M. L. I. CO.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Phonograph Records

By Richard Gilbert

Records of songs from *Porgy and Bess* prompt a footnote to reviews of Gershwin's "folk-opera." . . . Music sung by Lawrence Tibbett and Helen Jepson found entertaining. . . . A new "Ninth" symphony recording from Vienna. . . . Eugene Ormandy performs Bruckner.

GEORGE GERSHWIN's music for *Porgy and Bess,* and Rouben Mamoulian's elaborately picturesque staging of Du Bose Heyward's drama of Catfish Row drew from first-night critics many extravagant hosannas. Admittedly, this Theatre Guild spectacle provides first-class entertainment, but I can't agree with the majority report and claim that with his score and a sure-fire dramatic hit Gershwin has concocted an important musical work of art. Whether or not his *Porgy and Bess* is an "opera" doesn't matter. That it will entertain more people than any previous operatic attempt on the part of a native composer goes without saying. Yet I do believe that not one American composer who ever tried his hand at a stage work displayed the disarming ignorance of the problems of musico-dramatic composition that Gershwin does in *Porgy and Bess.*

For a work of flimsy formal structure, *Porgy and Bess* holds up amazingly well on thin supports of synthetic Negro melody, scat singing, musical comedy love duets, and numbers easily converted into fox-trots by virtue of "swing" and ragtime. The songs (rather than arias), choruses, and other set numbers, as they unfold one after the other, never appear as component parts of a single comprehensive idea. There is little generative design. The linking together of the parts shows no logical sequence beyond that established, naturally, by the libretto. Gershwin's command of the orchestra, as a medium of dramatic effect, beyond a conventional and artificial representation, is wholly negligible; many of his accompaniments lack all but superficial meaning—in short, the composer absolutely refuses to pose for himself the problems of form which must confront any true creator of a moving, emotional musical structure.

His tunes, although never profound aids to the meaning or expression of the text, do contribute the most refreshing and original element in *Porgy and Bess.* Here one finds Gershwin's most distinguished talent, the genuineness of which few will deny. However, the commercial use to which he has always put his gift has prevented him from writing anything approaching the intensity of expression characteristic of the song writers of all ages whose creations give, because of unswerving fidelity to reality, unceasing pleasure. A good Gershwin tune—and *Porgy and Bess* reduces itself pretty much to tunes so far as the music is concerned—is more imaginative, more haunting, and generally more virile than others of its kind emanating from the Broadway song shops or Hollywood studios; but, in common with these other purely commercial products, its tinselly, sentimental style, which captivates immediately, eventually plagues even undiscriminating listeners. I admire the dreamy nostalgia of *Summertime,* the unctuous humor of *It Ain't Necessarily So,* and the raciness of *A Woman Is a Sometime Thing*—Gershwin has never written better songs than these. *My Man's Gone Now,* patterned on the spiritual, is almost poignant. The song with which the drama is concluded, *Where Is My Bess,* finds Gershwin seeking genuine pathos and falling down miserably. The duet, *Bess You Is My Woman Now,* surpasses by several degrees the best musical comedy traditions, but doesn't quite reach an artistic level. The popular hit, *I Got Plenty of Nuttin',* will be one of the first tunes to get on your nerves a month hence.

The songs mentioned above, plus *The Buzzard Song* (deleted from the stage production) have been recorded by Lawrence Tibbett and Helen Jepson, with the original chorus and orchestra conducted by Alexander Smallens. I am not certain that the inclusion of stellar names enriches this set of records. Tibbett's tendency toward a kind of style wavering between the minstrel show and the "mammy" technic isn't, I am informed reliably, thought much of by the Negro members of the cast of *Porgy and Bess* who have heard these records. I can see no reason for discarding such an artist as Ruby Elzy (Serena) in favor of Miss Jepson, whose conception of Serena's mournful elegy (*My Man's Gone Now*) lacks all of the taut plaintiveness put across the footlights by the former. And I cannot accept Tibbett's *It Ain't Necessarily So* after hearing that ineffaceable Sportin' Life, John W. Bubbles. Tibbett and Jepson manage the Porgy and Bess songs without much effort, and the choral work, of course, is excellent. The orchestra is well in the background—no great loss. *Highlights of Porgy and Bess* (Victor set No. C25) offers delectable entertainment for the moment, but I don't believe you'll be listening to it a year from now—the majority report notwithstanding.

Beethoven's *Ninth* and Bruckner's *Seventh,* as formidable a pair of symphonies as one could wish for a winter's evening, are published by Columbia (set No. 227) and Victor (set No. M276) respectively. The former work employs the services of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; the Vienna State Opera Chorus; Louise Helletsgruber, soprano; Rosette Anday, contralto; Georg Maikl, tenor; Richard Mayr,[1] bass; and Felix Weingartner, conductor. The cause of Bruckner is advanced by Eugene Ormandy and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. The feature these works have most in common is a lengthy third movement: Beethoven stops just about when we have had enough, Bruckner takes us through measures of interminable and relentless apostrophe. Both symphonies have been

[1] VIENNA—Richard Mayr, basso of the Vienna State Opera, formerly of the Metropolitan Opera, died on December 1. Mr. Mayr was born in Salzburg fifty-eight years ago. His first professional appearance was at the Hofoper in Vienna as Don Gomez in *Ernani.* Subsequently, he sang a wide range of rôles, serious and comic, of which his Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier* is world famous (Victor set No. M196). His American debut was made in 1927 as Pogner in *Die Meistersinger.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the Days Before "Price Sales" Predominated

advertising space in the Fifth Avenue buses was used by all the leading department stores of New York City for the very good reason that the buses carry shoppers to the center of the shopping district.

In one year the Fifth Avenue buses delivered to the doors of the Wanamaker store 284,294 passengers and 366,918 passengers were carried away from Wanamaker's by the Fifth Avenue buses. A survey made by the Fifth Avenue Coach Company a few years ago showed that, based on a month's tabulation, the buses delivered to

	Passengers per year
Lord & Taylor's	378,000
Altman's	423,000
McCreery's Fifth Avenue Entrance	233,400
Best & Co.	184,500
Franklin Simon & Co.	134,700
John Wanamaker	284,290

The buses still furnish to advertisers what is probably the best group of purchasers that can be reached through any one advertising medium in New York City; merchandise in specialty shops and department stores can be profitably advertised to Fifth Avenue bus passengers without the use of "Price Sales" copy.

If you want to increase your business let us show you how to use the card space in the Fifth Avenue buses.

An advertising agency commission of 15% and a 2% cash discount are of course part of our program and have been for fifteen years.

JOHN H. LIVINGSTON, JR.

Advertising Space in the Fifth Avenue Buses
425 Fifth Avenue, N. Y. CAledonia 5-2151

recorded before, and in each case there is something to be said in favor of the carlier recordings.

The *Ninth* as recorded by the Philadelphia Orchestra, chorus and soloists, under the direction of Leopold Stokowski (Victor set No. M236), remains superior in all points of recording technic; and, throughout, the playing of the Philadelphians is more finished and more securely responsive to tonal and interpretative demands. Weingartner is too precise, in places downright rigid. I like, rather, Stokowski's dramatic fire —the ebb and flow. On the other hand, Weingartner's soloists soar far above the individual singing in Victor's performance; his chorus is also superior. I suppose the fact that Schiller's *Ode to Joy* is sung in the original tongue will naturally mean a great deal to many listeners; but I am always amused by this preference on the part of individuals who do not understand German. The lower price of the Columbia set will exert an appeal.

I am convinced that Eugene Ormandy and his orchestra are not much interested in Bruckner's music. If Victor desires a recording of Bruckner's *Seventh,* why must the work be assigned to a conductor who palpably hasn't much enthusiasm for playing it? Why not give it to Otto Klemperer and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony? At any rate you will find a more satisfactory interpretation of this *Symphony No. 7 in E Major* on Polydor records Nos. 66802 to 66808 by Jascha Horenstein and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. I should like to hear Horenstein's reading in an up-to-date recording. Something can be done with that beautiful tonal fabric Bruckner has woven throughout the *Adagio.* The Mid-western orchestra hasn't made the best of it.

Behind the Scenes

(*Continued from page 64*)

they got along together much better than they often do now. In my opinion the first step in an organization for the betterment of children's chances, is to get the parents together. I am afraid now we would have to line up many fathers on the side of anti-child activities. Sometimes these are business activities, and sometimes it is simply that they fail to hold up their end in creating a favorable home atmosphere.

Parents of pre-school children may belong to this organization and often do. In many places sample ballots are not sent out for school elections, but notices are given to the school children to take home, and notices published in the local paper. Unless a non-parent was especially interested he or she would not be likely to vote. However, when the proposition involves taxes, it is pretty hard to keep the Knotts from voting the proposition down, and I agree that the election ought to be limited to parents.

(*Continued on page 12*)

PORGY & BESS

Album—Recorded by

Lawrence Tibbett —Helen Jepson

with the original chorus, and orchestra conducted by Alexander Smallens

All America is excited over this extraordinary new Gershwin masterpiece—the most successful popular opera ever written by an American composer.

Based on the famous play of Negro life, "Porgy and Bess" is not only one of the most intensely-absorbing musical dramas ever staged —it is also Gershwin at his best, Gershwin with hundreds of new ideas and scores of haunting new melodies.

In this specially-planned Album, the lovely lyric soprano of Helen Jepson contrasts with the colorful brilliance of the greatest living operatic baritone, Lawrence Tibbett. Here are the dramatic highlights of the entire opera... Tibbett singing *The Buzzard Song, It Ain't Necessarily So, I Got Plenty of Nuttin', Where is My Bess?...* Jepson singing *Lullaby* and *My Man's Gone Now*...Tibbett and Jepson together in the Summertime scene and crap game, with *A Woman is a Sometime Thing,* and *Bess, You is My Woman Now.*

4 12-inch Red Seal records—5 great scenes in all—$6.50. This special album of Gershwin's greatest work makes a marvelous gift... to yourself or any other music-lover you know!

VICTOR RECORDS

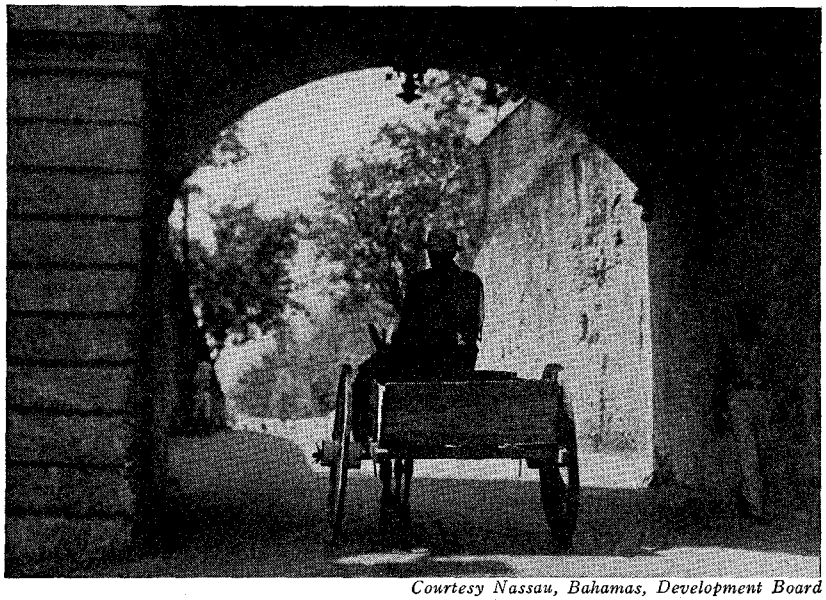
RCA Victor Division, RCA Mfg. Co., Inc., Camden, N.J.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If I Should Ever Travel

By Katherine Gauss Jackson

● Southern cruises. . . . To South America, Jamaica, Trinidad and the other islands with Marie Caldwell. . . . Nassau. . . . Walter Gilkyson writes a letter from Haiti.



Courtesy Nassau, Bahamas, Development Board

GREGORY ARCH, FAMILIAR LANDMARK IN NASSAU

WELL, I've been at it again—travelling. Not exactly extensively, but over the Alleghanies to Pittsburgh in the Ford and it was adventure and plenty for me. We travelled at night to save time, and speeding over the winding roads we found ourselves feeling very fine and free. That absurdly dashing and rollicking old children's tune kept going round and round in my head:

Over the river and through the woods
To Grandmother's house we go:
The horse knows the way to carry the sleigh
Through the white and drifted snoooooow!—

For indeed it was to "Grandmother's house" that we were going. But "the horse knows the way to carry the sleigh!" Gracious! It was 400 miles to our "Grandmother's house" and we *didn't* know the way and kept up a frantic search from map to signpost through all the little Pennsylvania towns for an elusive route 22. As for the white and drifted snow, it began to pour pitchforks, though it was wintry enough, and the final modern touch that drove the old song scampering was when I suddenly looked out, peering through the dark to get a better look at a road that looked distressingly black and slippery and heard my own natural query: "Is that macadam or concrete?" reverberate against Grandmother's old world of rivers and woods and horses and sleighs. It was finished, and for a minute I was subdued. But there was plenty of snow in those quiet mountains on the way back, and I got my fill of wishing for the horse and sleigh on the tortuous turns. So now I'm ready, and more; to turn my attention to the South.

Southern Cruises

Cruises, Cruises, Cruises! I'm quite sure the world has never been so full of them, has never been so ready to show you the West Indies, Bermuda, the Bahamas, South America, Mexico, California—and whether the cruise be three days or thirty-two depends entirely on you. The Mediterranean situation and Mussolini's warships have driven most of the scheduled vacation cruises from that part of the world to different stamping grounds, or rather, I guess I would say, to different anchorages. A good many of these cruises have been diverted to South America, already a favorite spot for winter cruisers and summer cruisers alike, and many hitherto inaccessible spots have been put within the reach of the tourist now. Moreover, the exchange is very, very favorable.

And then there are the islands. Marie Caldwell, who wrote "In Defense of Tourists" for us some months ago, has written me of many of these places, all different, all with definite characteristics of their own, though often separated by only a few miles of ocean, one from the other. There's Jamaica, "mountainous and beautiful. There are charming drives by motor through mountain gorges and jungles of tree ferns, and at the right season the orchids in Castleton Gardens, Jamaica's botanical station, are worth going miles to see."

Port of Spain, in Trinidad, "is a thriving city, more exotic, perhaps, than any of the others. Spanish and Negro blood form the basis of the population but the English are here, of course, and the Venezuelans from across the straits, Chinese shops are everywhere, and most interesting of all is the East Indian colony originally imported to work the plantations. . . . The country beyond is delightful with its mahogany forests and cocoa plantations and if you can spare the time the famous asphalt lake is well worth a visit. . . . I recommend one of their long fresh mint and lime concoctions which will put new zest into the most jaded tourist."

Curaçao in the Lesser Antilles, "is Dutch and looks it. The houses in Willemstadt are scrubbed as clean as a new pin but you won't notice them. You'll be too anxious to get into the perfume shops ahead of your neighbor."

But for real shopping, she says, you'd better wait for Colon and Panama, in Central America. "The men will certainly inspect the Canal. If you are women you ought to do the same but you'll probably be buried knee deep in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chinese linens, embroidered underwear, East Indian jewelry, and the like."

Back to the islands, again, Mrs. Caldwell finds Saba, one of the least known of them all, fascinating, "where the inhabitants live high up in the crater of an extinct volcano and develop the characteristics of a mountain goat sliding their boats down to the sea."

St. Thomas, in the Virgin Islands, will some day be another winter resort like Nassau, she believes, and in the meantime "it smells deliciously of bay rum, and life there may be as simple and unspoiled as anything can be in this complicated world."

Dominica, British, and the most beautiful of the Leeward islands, has "jagged mountains rising abruptly from the sea, vividly green with tropical vegetation and often veiled by rain clouds. Hidden away in their depths is still a pitiful remnant of the Caribs, that pure-blooded Indian race which once populated the West Indies and died rather than submit to the merciless Spanish rule." So that's the why of the Caribbean Sea—and incidentally my Webster says that it is definitely Caribbe'an Sea and not Cari'bbean, as I have heard it several times of late.

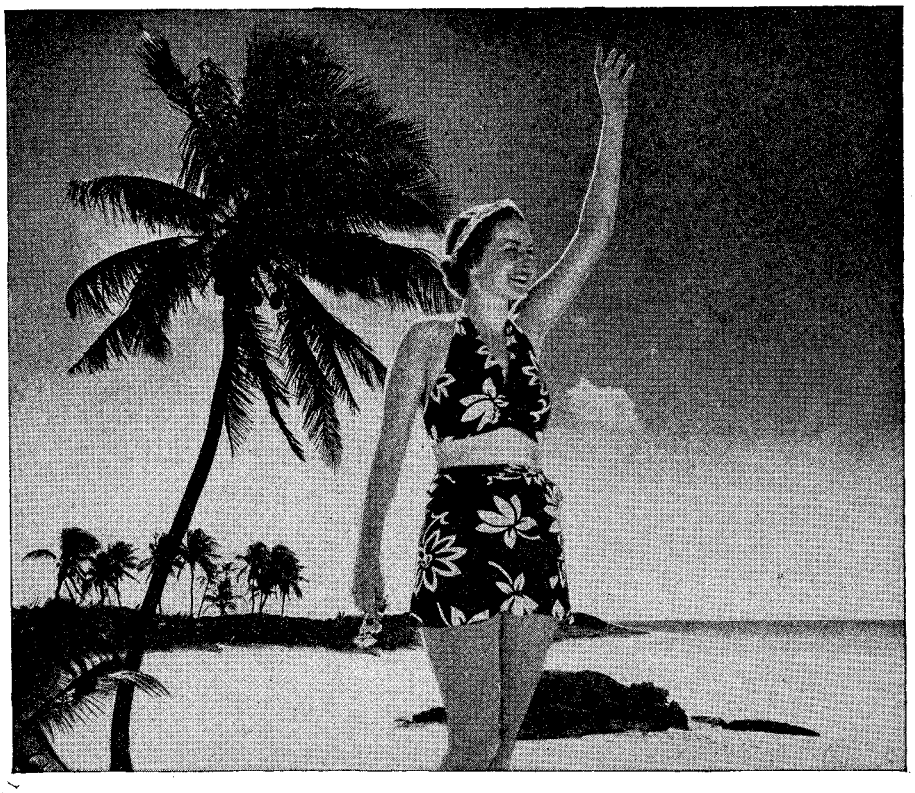
"The French Islands," she writes, "have an atmosphere of their own. The trip across Martinique is beautiful and exciting. You'll like the scenery if you can forget your native driver whose earnest belief is that Heaven protects those who lean heaviest on the motor horn."

Barbados she liked best of all the islands—again British. "Not much scenery," she says, "mostly miles of sugar cane, but the place has a charm

(*Continued on page 10*)

So. Pacific R. R. of Mexico

MEXICAN MARKET SCENE



Nassau IN THE BAHAMAS

...WINTER HAVEN OF TWO CONTINENTS

In Nassau's sunny skies, soft breezes and flowers, there is nothing to remind of icy streets, windy city canyons and damp chilling subways. Golf, tennis, ocean bathing, all the outdoor sports call to healthful activity. Palm shaded beaches are made for the laziest lounging in the world. For the ideal vacation where could you find so much, *so near*, and for so little?

THE FAMOUS WORLD CRUISE LINER

"Carinthia"

SAILS EVERY SATURDAY

From January 25th to March 28th special 6-day cruises *from New York*, with a daylight day and evening in Nassau, for as low as $70 with the Carinthia as your hotel. Also 13-day tours including hotel room and meals in Nassau (rates on application). For longer vacations, the one-way fare is as low as $65; round-trip fares, with stop-over privileges, and return by later sailing of the Carinthia, as low as $95. No passports required.

Ask your Local Travel Agent about the Cunard White Star Deferred Payment Plan or consult Cunard White Star Line, 25 Broadway, or 638 Fifth Ave., New York ...or Nassau, Bahamas, Information Bureau, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York.

6 DAYS

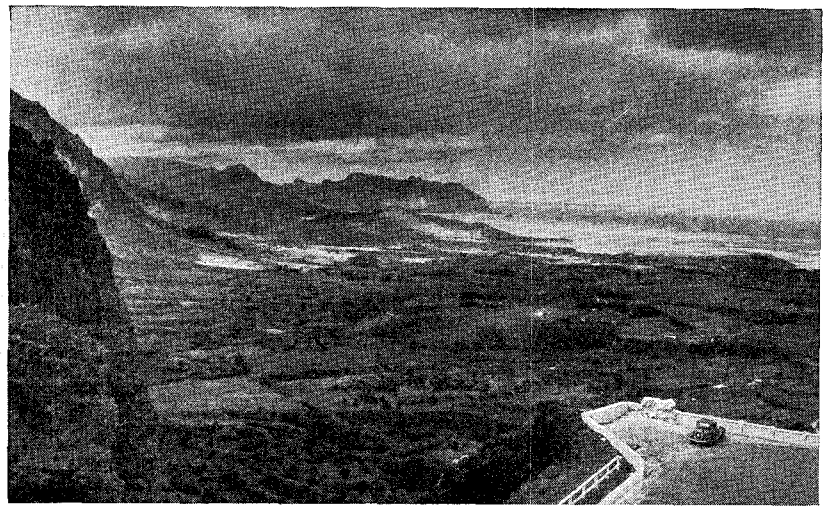
$70 UP

The British Tradition distinguishes

CUNARD WHITE STAR

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IF I SHOULD EVER TRAVEL



Courtesy Hawaiian Tourist Bureau

THE PALI AND A VIEW OF OAHU, NEAR HONOLULU

that's hard to forget." And she goes on to tell of a walled garden "glowing with bougainvillia and drenched with the scent of jasmine and tuberoses." From there, too, she sends a tantalizing recipe for planters' punch—"one of sour, two of sweet, three of strong and four of weak; referring to the lime juice, sugar syrup, rum—Barbados, of course—and ice."

Nassau

As for Nassau, she gives me a whole story on it.

"No matter what variety of holiday you like, Nassau has it. That very popular British possession which lies either by sea or by air practically at our doorstep is an ideal vacation resort for a day or for a year. If you like the social whirl—all the appurtenances of smart resort life—you will find it in the big, de-luxe hotels during the winter season. Yachting, speed-boating, tennis or golf fill the day or perhaps a leisurely shopping expedition through the little town looking for linens or Tana cotton from Liberty's famous shop in London, doeskin in lovely shades, or the best of the English woolens. Don't forget to buy sponges. They are good here and cheap, and don't miss the colorful fish market if you are feeling particularly strong that morning. In the evening you dance or play bridge or drive behind a sleepy horse and a sleepier coachman through a warm, starlit night to Paradise Beach where you dance again, if you like, to an exceedingly lively native orchestra, and toward dawn stop in at the famous Dirty Dick's—don't let the name put you off—for a sandwich and a cool drink in the little patio before going home to bed.

"On the other hand, if you crave long, sunburned days of sailing or deep-sea fishing, days of utter solitude with only the sky and the sea to keep you company, and a quiet boarding house or one of the smaller and cheaper English hotels to come back to at night, you can have that, too.

"Always, for every one, there is the beach at Hog Island. Think of all the things you want most in a bathing beach and you've got them—hot, white sand but always the trade winds to cool you off, pleasant companions, and a heavenly ocean that glows with all the colors of a peacock's tail. You may lunch at the beach, patronize the bar, practically spend your life there if you want to.

"If you feel that way, however, you'd better buy an island of your own near by. I know one for sale right now, complete with small house and still smaller guest cottage, staffed with soft-voiced, easy-tempered colored servants, a tennis court of its own, and the whole Caribbean to play in just beyond the veranda.

"Back of all this holiday gaiety, the real life of Nassau goes on, that quiet, unobtrusive, utterly charming life which English people know so well how to maintain in their island possessions. There are teas in secluded gardens shut away from the tourist world, dinners in cool, high-ceilinged dining rooms where the talk ranges from Capri to Kalabahai, or perhaps on state occasions, Royalty is entertained at Government House with much pomp and ceremony. That is the real Nassau and you are lucky, indeed, if you are asked to share in it."

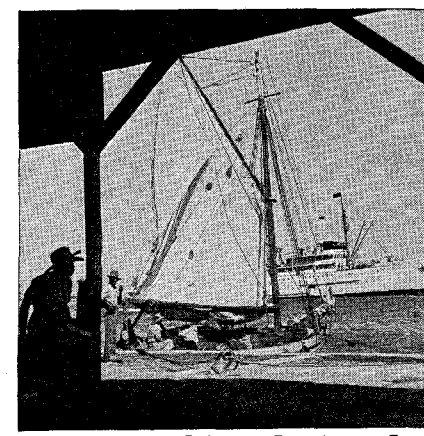
And I have only one amendment to add. She says that there is "*Hot,* white sand," and I'm sure that it must be at least comfortably warm, but a friend of mine who spent a month there last winter reported that the strange part of it all to him was that the sand never really *did* get hot as it does on our beaches here. The sun would get so hot that you couldn't possibly bear to stay out in it at all, and yet the sand would be cool to your feet instead of scorching them as it would here. We wondered why.

Walter Gilkyson on Haiti

Just now, by air mail, comes a letter from Haiti, from Walter Gilkyson, giving a finer interpretive picture of that little-known spot than I've ever seen anywhere and which I hand on with gratitude and pleasure.

"The Island of Haiti has, for some reason or other, been looked upon as an island of illusion and mystery, and even danger, inhabited by magic-loving blacks who loathe the whites and hide away in jungles that are filled with wild beasts and poisonous snakes. The last travel book on the island, *Voodoo Fire,* a work of such unadulterated imagination that no one here yet knows whether the author ever saw the island or not, gives, I think, a typical "literary" description of Haiti—half peril, half terror, and all untrue. I even heard it said in the States that Seabrook never left Port-au-Prince, but that, like all the others rumors about this extraordinary place, is equally false.

"First, you can travel in Haiti, and back into the mountains if you like, with absolute safety. In a time of revolution, no, but then no country is safe when its people are at war. There has been peace now for several years, and in the small villages of the interior the white man is received with a friendliness and respect that is, to say the least, reassuring, and no doubt would be beneficial and even stimulating to an



Courtesy Nassau, Bahamas, Development Board

SPONGE BOAT, NASSAU

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HOTEL
DENNIS
ATLANTIC CITY

Directly on the Boardwalk

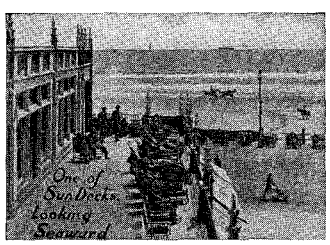
Offers the warm welcome of an ideal Winter home beside the sea . . . with all modern comforts and features for every member of the family . . . spacious sun decks and solaria . . . unique Garden Terrace . . . ocean view guest rooms . . . sea water in all baths — complete health bath department.

Golf. Riding. Roller Chairing. Indoor Ice Hockey. Cards. Dances and Musical Attractions.

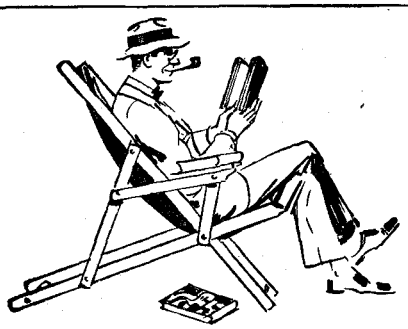
American and European Plans

Three blocks from Auditorium and Union Station

WALTER J. BUZBY, INC.



DORLANDA



Wherever You Go You'll Want BOOKS!

On trains, airplanes, boats; in Florida — on cruises, long or short — BOOKS will pass the time pleasantly.

Relax and read of travel, fiction, biography. Your bookseller can help make your winter vacation a success. Pay him a visit.

American Booksellers Association

uncertain soul. As for the upper classes, they have no feeling against the Americans; I talked with the President and many of the high officials of the Government and found them hospitable and polite, and far more interested in French literature than in racial antagonism.

"The island, then, being free to visitors from the United States, what is there to see, and can you be comfortable, and is travel made easy? Well, you can be comfortable, very comfortable indeed in Port-au-Prince. The hotel here, called Sans-Souci and owned by Ralph Barnes, is in a way a sort of American Club, with somewhat of the quality of the Villa Margherita at Charleston, or Pomander Walk in Bermuda, but not quite so stiff, when I come to think of it; more casual, tropical, and various in its guests, with just a suggestion that you are after all in a wild land. Among other reasons I like it because so many people I know have been here—Struthers and Katherine Burt, who in a way seem still to be somewhere about. Ralph Barnes has been on the island fifteen years and I found it easy to travel under his direction, for several days in fact without once seeing a white face.

"I cannot imagine a better place for a pack trip into the mountains. The automobile roads are fair, but there is only one main road open now, to Cape Haitien and the northern part of the island. It is a three days' trip by car to the Cape, and the Citadel of King Christophe, and if you are lucky and willing to stay up all night there are extraordinary dances to be seen which are performed with an earnestness of purpose that puts Burlesque to shame.

"As for the Citadel of King Christophe, lying not far from the little town of Milot in the northern part of the island, it is unique; a monument to the implacable will of a man, and black at that. Never did any one seek safety in such a grand manner nor with such magnificent gestures, translated into a huge fortress standing on a mountain thousands of feet above the sea. You think of the Pyramids and remember that it was not immortality that Christophe sought, but simple human safety. After such a gigantic effort it seems only natural that he should have committed suicide."

It is mundane, but important, to remind you that these places are within your reach. Cruises stopping at various combinations of these ports come as reasonably as sixteen days for $120, or five-and-a-half days, say, for $65.

"The ship, plus the service, plus the passenger list, plus the Caribbean—it all adds up to the best vacation I ever had."

Pleasure travelers invariably approve the Great White Fleet . . . the exotic tropical ports . . . and the sports, dancing and entertainment aboard our spotless white liners. Outdoor swimming pools, alluring music, and other cruising delights—plus the famous intimate, personalized service that makes "every passenger a guest."

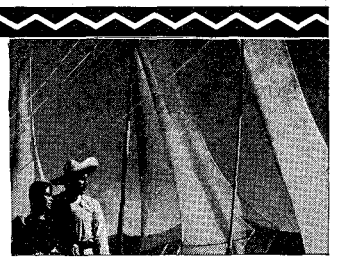
FROM NEW YORK—A wide selection of cruises of 10 to 18 days—variously to HAVANA, JAMAICA, B. W. I., PANAMA, COLOMBIA, S. A., COSTA RICA, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS. Rates from $125 to $200 minimum. Sailings Thursdays and Saturdays. No passports required.

Similar "Guest Cruises" to the West Indies and the Caribbean from New Orleans, Los Angeles, San Francisco.

Apply any authorized travel agency or **UNITED FRUIT CO.**, *Pier 3, North River, or 632 Fifth Avenue, New York; 111 West Washington St., Chicago; 321 St. Charles St., New Orleans.*

"Guest Cruises"
GREAT WHITE FLEET

It's **BALMY** *on . . .*



Lake PATZCUARO

ESCAPE Winter's icy blasts in *Central Mexico*, where the only snows are on high mountain peaks.

Sail sun-kissed *Lake Pátzcuaro*. Explore its picture-book island villages. Thrill to the voluptuous semi-tropic beauty of *Uruapan*, near by.

Explore Mexico's colorful byways—*Oaxaca, Mitla, Monte Alban, Jalapa, Veracruz, Alvarado, Guadalajara, Lake Chapala, Guanajuato.* You can . . . on a modest budget! SEE YOUR TRAVEL AGENT FOR LOW ALL-EXPENSE QUOTATIONS.

Free illustrated folder. **NATIONAL RAILWAYS of MEXICO** Alamo Nat'l Bldg., San Antonio, Tex.

Thrill to MEXICO'S Byways

Thrill to Scenic MEXICO

A PLAN to suit each taste and every purse . . . ALL-EXPENSE ESCORTED TOURS, providing the best in travel—fine hotels, private cars for sightseeing, expert guides, frequent departures.

Low cost INDIVIDUAL CIRCLE TOURS . . . all arrangements made . . . expenses budgeted in advance. Go any day . . . from anywhere. Take a "Summer" vacation in Old Mexico this Winter . . . to the land of glamour, romance and adventure. Write for free booklet. AMERICAN EXPRESS COMPANY, 180 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago.

Visit the **MEXICO** *Not Known to Tourists*

Get away from "standardized tours." See and do the things that really interest YOU. For six years we've specialized in giving the *intelligent traveler* a glimpse behind the scenes—of things missed by tourists—at less cost than floundering around. Hotel reservations free. Ordinary 2c. postal card will bring folder.

AGUIRRES GUEST TOURS
Cinco de Mayo 16-C, Mexico City

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Behind the Scenes

(*Continued from page 7*)

Whereas Mrs. Wendell D. George of Watertown, New York, merely sends an emphatic "Three cheers for Gilbert Seldes and The War for the Future!"

"A Constant Reader—and Parent" says on the other hand:

UNTRUTHFUL AND UNFAIR

Gilbert Seldes is like many clever people—untruthful, and unfair.

His portrait of the fine people with children, and the terrible folk who have none, is proved maliciously wrong by any look around.

"I protect my children—" hokum!

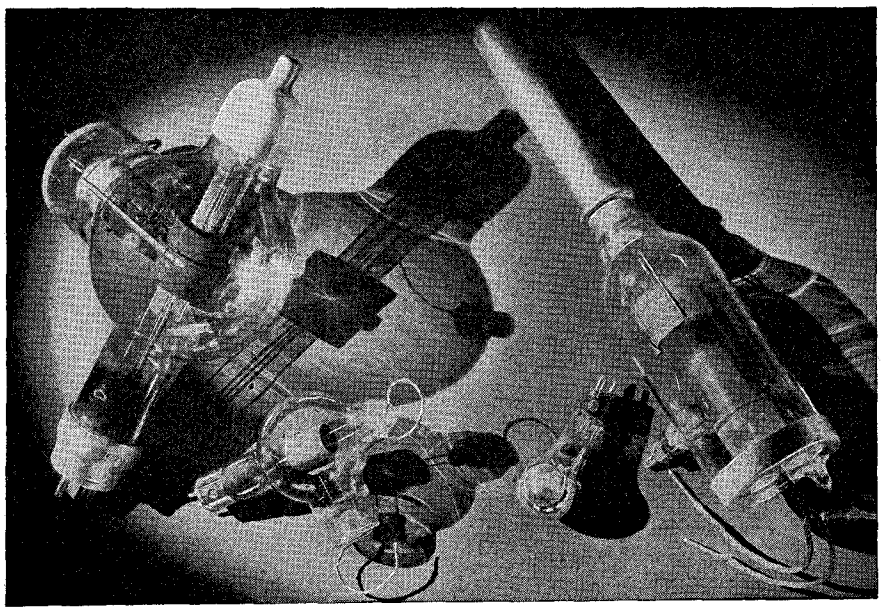
Go to any movie house on Saturday afternoon, and see how well the parents protect their little ones.

On all the "great fundamental questions of our time" the childless will come as near to working and voting according to the dictates of common sense and the best interests of all as parents.

Mr. Seldes, of course, has no naïve belief that parenthood makes either saint or martyr out of man or woman.

He only pretends he believes so.

In other words, he has just trumped up another "piece" for a magazine that isn't as good as it used to be, honest. "Parents vs. Non-Parents" is a real reason why.



JUST TUBES

ONLY strange shapes of glass and metal! Yet it's the electron tube that gives radio its tongue, that brings to your fireside music played a thousand miles away.

It's the electron tube that leads ships through fog, guides airplanes through darkness, peers unwinkingly into white-hot crucibles, directs the surgeon's knife, and is becoming one of the greatest weapons against disease.

It tests the safety of castings and welds, matches the color of dress goods, and unerringly detects manufacturing errors that the human eye cannot discern.

A few years ago, it was only a laboratory device. Today, it is weaving an invisible network of service about man's daily life. Tomorrow, it will do things that were never done before.

Continual development in electron tubes is only one of the contributions made by G-E research—research that has saved the public from ten to one hundred dollars for every dollar it has earned for General Electric.

96-180D1

GENERAL ELECTRIC

Dwight E. Allen of Niagara Falls, N. Y., writes:

TOWARD OBSCURANTISM?

Sirs: If Mr. Paul Hutchinson has expressed correctly current opinion among religious thinkers (October SCRIBNER'S: "Back to Sin") then religion is taking a step backward. One of the most important advances made by religious leaders was when they faced frankly the discovery by modern psychology that the concept of sin was based on misunderstanding of human nature. The truth is that the individual is not wholly responsible for his behavior; some responsibility must be accepted by society. Realization of the obligation on the part of society resulting from this responsibility has only begun to receive general acceptance. Anything which tends to discredit the findings of psychology, making the man a completely free moral agent naturally will tend to blunt the social conscience regarding its duty toward him and may be considered to be mainly a rationalization of social selfishness.

More serious than this however is the attitude of discouragement, almost of cynicism, regarding the ethical teachings of Jesus. "What would Jesus do?—Who knows?" quotes Mr. Hutchinson. What is the matter with our ministers that they talk like this? Is the Golden Rule too esoteric to be understood? Is the command to love one's neighbor as oneself too obscure for general application? I suspect the difficulty may lie in unwillingness to accept the immediate results of applying these principles in everyday situations. Truth is obscure to the man who is afraid to face it.

I believe the movement discussed by Mr. Hutchinson is morbid, if not actually psychopathic and expresses the almost universal discouragement over economic and social conditions of the past few years. Instead of pandering to this morbidity it seems to me that ministers should try to reawaken people's courage to face conditions without dodging.

The article "Who's Standardized?" by Dorothy Colburn in the November issue, brings the following interesting and justified criticism from John Mackie, Rector of the Leith Academy Secondary School in Edinburgh, Scotland. We did use "British" loosely.

ENGLISH NOT SCOTCH

I have read with great interest the article "Who's Standardized?" in the November issue of your magazine. The sub-heading is "A Comment on British and American Education"; so I should like to call your attention to the fact that throughout the article it is the *English* system that is described and commented upon. The system in Scotland, and the centuries-old ideas of public policy regarding education, are quite different. Indeed, most of the things in English education your contributor selects for comment and criticism, are those which are peculiarly English. For instance, no Scotsman thinks it at all curious that some student should be hard-up and work for some money. The sentence "To a Briton, an educational system open to every degree of intelligence seems necessarily of low quality," may be true in England but it is not true in Scotland.

I read somewhere, probably in an American magazine or book, that many things in American education were traceable to the Scotsmen among the early settlers; and so were explained the many similarities in Scotland and America. It would be a pity if our American friends were to include us in their condemnation of certain English shortcomings which have never characterized our own educational system.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED